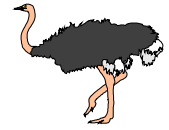


STRAUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.



Volume 2 Number 1

Newsletter

August 2000

February 6, 1892
To my Dear Children;

These lines are penned with the view that they will only reach your eyes when I have passed away are intended to embrace a few thoughts that occur to me which if observed may guard you against a rock on which many families have wrecked one of the great fountains of happiness in life-unity.

Work harmoniously together; always preserve the keenest interest and solicitude for each other's welfare. By unity I mean sincerity of esteem and reciprocal affection which will never permit word uttered or a deed perpetrated in passion to lurk in the bosom. Be quick to forgive, ready to forget, eager to acknowledge when you have been in the wrong. Stubbornness is a grievous fault.

None of us are perfect and we can always deter little shortcomings in others more quickly than we will recognize greater ones in ourselves.

Difference of opinion will arise between thinking persons. Whoever may have been right should not exult



and taunt the other for having been wrong.

Whatever material and other success our family may have achieved is chiefly due to that unity here portrayed and the rising generation, which I hope will enjoy and benefit therefrom, should know it was not obtained without personal sacrifices and mutual forbearance's and if this is to be maintained and further built upon, never give place to jealousies nor permit differences to estrange you.

With paternal affection,

Isidor Straus

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Post Office Box 416
Smithtown, NY 11787-0416
631-265-0383
631-724-4487 (fax)
FAMJAD@aol.com

Joan Adler, Editor

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The Straus Historical Society, Inc. is dedicated to advancing the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Lazarus Straus family and the historical context in which they lived through research and education. The Straus Historical Society Newsletter is a semi-annual publication of the Straus Historical Society, Inc. You are invited to submit articles or ideas for articles, calendar events, and material relating to the Straus family and their history.

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**A Message from the Vice Chair of the Board:
William Sachs Straus**

"Why the Straus Historical Society?" This is the question posed to me on several occasions by friends and family members (names to remain anonymous) who were trying to understand how I could be so passionate in my efforts to recruit them as new members in our organization. We are not out to save the world, I admitted. And our motives are surely apolitical and certainly have nothing to do with

hi-tech start-ups. But when pressed to consider this question, I realized the answer has to do with the unique historical perspective gained from the study and understanding of one family's evolution through almost three centuries of history, and the way that such an understanding can resonate with individuals and families in the present day. As a descendant of Nathan Straus, my mind is often drawn to the images of his New York City milk stations where safe, pasteurized milk was first made widely available to the masses. The accomplishments and character of the Straus family clearly impact many of us today whether or not we are consciously aware of it.

The Straus Historical Society is devoted to the preservation and exchange of information pertaining to the history of this fascinating family. We are blessed to have a wealth of information to work with, though it is tremendously time consuming and costly to carry out our mission on an ongoing basis. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform you about the many projects and events currently in the pipeline with the goal of encouraging your active support and participation in the Society. Our hope is that by assembling a comprehensive, accessible archive of information about the Straus family and an open forum for the exchange of historically relevant documents and ideas, we can ensure that the history and character of the family will continue to inspire and inform our future so that no potential member should have to ask the question, "Why the Straus Historical Society?"



**A Message from the Executive Director:
Joan Adler**

As we move into the summer months, a time when work activities generally slow down, I find the long days not nearly long enough. There have been so many exciting developments in the past few months. We continue our work with Professor McCash on her proposed book about Isidor and Ida Straus. Dr. Jim Henderson has begun work on a second edition of his excellent book, *Bohemian Decorated Porcelain*. Dr. Hans Steinebrei's book, *300 Jahr Auswanderung aus Otterburg (300 Years Emigration from Otterburg)* has been published, and Robin Schafer Dillon and Anna Straus are translating the sections which deal with the Straus family.

I have been working with several families who believe they are related to the Lazarus Straus family. In one case, a genealogical researcher from Germany sent a family tree of more than 3,000 people, all related to the Strauses. I have been working diligently to incorporate this information into our database. Once that information is entered, we will have more than 6,600 people included in the family tree. Amazing! And more projects are just beginning. Look for our announcements in the next issue of the newsletter and by flyer as warranted.

My job would be impossible without your active support and participation. Let me hear from you!

REMINISCENCES of Jacob GREENEBAUM, Sr.

Written for his Children in 1859

Translated by Henriette Greenebaum Frank
(granddaughter) 1917

Compiled for JewishGen by Susan E. King
Notes and footnotes by John H. Rubel

Notes and footnotes excerpted by Joan Adler

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(**Note:** Johanette GREENEBAUM married Isaak STRAUS in about 1808. They were the parents of 14 children. Their oldest, Lazarus STRAUS, married his first cousin, Sara STRAUS. Lazarus and Sara were the parents of Isidor, Hermine, Nathan and Oscar. This article, written by Jacob GREENEBAUM Sr., first cousin of Johanette GREENEBAUM, gives its readers a glimpse into the lives of the GREENEBAUM family and, therefore, into the lives of other people with similar backgrounds who also lived during this time and in this region, like their relatives the STRAUSES. It also shares with us some of the history of Germany/France during the 18th and 19th centuries as it applied to Jews.)

REMINISCENCES of Jacob GREENEBAUM, Sr.

About 140 years ago (1719) there lived in Fussgonheim, canton Mutterstadt, a man named Benjamin JOSEPH (GREENEBAUM) and his wife Feile (Viola); these had among them a number of children, one by the name of Hirsch. As at that time the Israelites had no surnames, they took the first name of the father as surname; therefore Hirsch was called Hirsch BENJAMIN (GREENEBAUM).



Farmland in the Rheinpalz of Germany
around Kaiserslautern

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He married Barbara JACOB, whose Hebrew name was Beier. She was from Imsbach, canton Winnweiler, and the couple settled in Munchweiler, in the same canton, as citizens enjoying the protection of the government for a certain length of time. It is to be noted in this connection that at the time, Jews had no right of citizenship; they had to pay a certain tax to the government each year, for which they received a bill of protection, which did not guarantee them all the rights of citizenship. They had to pay besides a water tax and money for permission to graze cattle on the communal meadows. These disabilities were removed under the regency of Napoleon I, when the Jews received rights of citizenship.

Hirsch BENJAMIN (GREENEBAUM) and his wife Barbara had five children, three sons and two daughters; the sons were

named Abraham, Nathan and Elias (GREENEBAUM), the daughters, Hendel and Breinle. At the same period, there lived in Rathskirchen, canton Wolfstein, a man by the name of Jacob ISAAC (FELSENTHAL) and his wife Hannah, whose maiden name was HERZ; I believe Jacob was from Idaat, and Hannah from Nahbollenbach, both places near Oberstein-an-der-Nahe. This couple had five children, - three sons named Isaac, Herz and Israel (FELSENTHAL); the names of the daughters were Sara and Miriam (FELSENTHAL). Hannah died in childbirth, and Jacob ISAAC (FELSENTHAL), at the time in the prime of life was heavily burdened with the care of his children.

He married again, his second wife being Leah WOLF from Essweiler, in the same canton, who was considered an excellent woman by all who knew her, not only on account of her modesty and virtue, but also for her care of her step-children, whom she regarded as her own. To this second marriage, a son and daughter were born; the son was named David, the daughter Judith (Jidle) (FELSENTHAL).

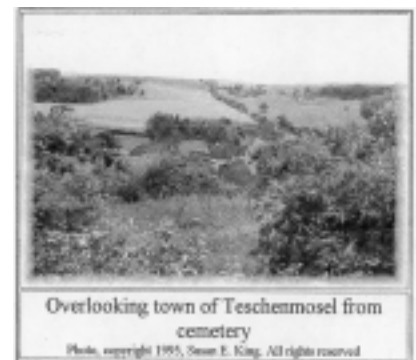


Town of Reipolskirchen

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Elias HIRSCH (GREENEBAUM) married Miriam (FELSENTHAL), daughter of Jacob ISAAC (FELSENTHAL) and Hannah (BAYER HERZ), and the couple settled in Reipolskirchen, canton Lauterecken, where during many years he carried on an extensive business in leather and iron; he was besides the owner of several herds of sheep, for which he leased pasturage in Reipolskirchen and surrounding communities. This couple was known in the whole region as most benevolent and they were beloved therefore by the poor and suffering, the widows and orphans, and were honored and respected by all.

He established without help from others a shelter for poor wandering Jews, of whom there were many at the time. In such a manner he earned a name for himself in that region that will not be forgotten, and he is spoken of to this day with greatest reverence.



Overlooking town of Teschenmosel from
cemetery

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As regards the synagogue, he was compelled to go to Teschenmosel, a distance of more than a league; therefore he established a synagogue himself, had the Scrolls of the Law written, and was sustained by the government of the Palatinate, situated in Mannheim at that time. The Jews of Nussbach and Hebensweiler were transferred to the synagogue at Reipolskirchen, and a penalty of one hundred Reichsthaler was threatened, if they did not join.

Peace on the home and financial success marked this happy union. Yet their existence was not one of uninterrupted joy; they experienced sadness and grief. In the first place, on account of the war, there were foreign troops in the land and Elias (GREENEBAUM) was twice robbed.

Secondly, at that time there was a band of robbers in the land, whose leader was John BREYLER or, as he was called, Schinderhannes, who often molested Elias with threats and incendiary letters, the details of which would take too much space to relate.

An end was made to this band of brigands in 1803, through the efforts of the French Government and the watchful eye of the police. The captain and several of his accomplices were guillotined at Mainz, and the others were sentenced to prison for life at hard labor.

The land was now safe from brigands, and the war continued in a more regulated manner. Many people again prospered in business and every citizen was granted a chance to recover from the hardships he had endured. But the couple of hardships mentioned was but the least of the hard fate they had to endure.

They, Elias HIRSCH (GREENEBAUM) and Miriam (FELSENTHAL) had a family of eleven children - seven sons and four daughters. At that time there was an epidemic of small-pox. Vaccination was not yet discovered, or at least was not generally practiced in the country, and death through this horrible illness demanded many victims among the children. Even of the many that escaped death, a number suffered in such measure that they became almost blind. Others bore deep scars, being thereby disfigured.

Among the children of the above mentioned couple this sickness raged terribly and six sons were torn from them by death; the writer of these lines, who has the honor to call himself the son of these estimable parents, alone was spared by the heavenly Father and under His protection was allowed a longer existence.

My name was originally Israel (GREENEBAUM), but on account of the sad fate which my parents, of blessed memory, suffered in regard to their children, the name of an animal BAER, was added to mine, and I was called Israel BAER. Whether this old established custom was of a cabalistic origin or of a religious nature is unknown to me.

My parents endured all patiently and bowed to the will of God with all submission. They lived piously and were faithful adherents of our faith. The daughters were Hannah, Fromet and Beier (GREENEBAUM). The name of the fourth one will be explained later.

The sad experience of the parents were continued in the lives of the children and caused grief and sorrow without parallel in that region in those days. In June 1804, our father (Elias GREENEBAUM) died as a result of a hemorrhage, which illness he had had some years before through shock, when two Aus-

trian soldiers, who were known only by the name of Red-coats, shot at him, and a bullet came so close that it singed his coat.

The death of my father caused general mourning in the whole region. Many mourned in him their guide, benefactor and protector. The loss that the nearest of kin had to bewail cannot be told in words, nor written down by pen, especially as the mother was pregnant and felt the grief of carrying an unborn orphan under her heart.

Great changes followed in the house, as according to French law, everything had to be put at public sale. Our mother (Miriam FELSENTHAL) had the firm resolve to continue the business in the same manner in all respects, partly to keep it for her children and bring them up under her own surveillance in her own business and she bid in everything herself. Her purpose was unfortunately not achieved.

Nineteen weeks later, in November of the same year, she gave birth to a daughter (Miriam GREENEBAUM); it was the easiest confinement she had ever had. Hardly had the child seen the light of day, when our mother swooned and alas, had to suffer death at that moment; all attempts to revive her proved fruitless. The physician explained that her death was caused by weakness and heart failure.

If the misery endured before had not reached the greatest measure, it was now overflowing. The newborn child was kept alive for fostering care with the aid of God, receiving the name of its mother, Miriam.



A second public sale was now held, and in sadness we had to sell all that our dear parents had acquired with toil and trouble, all that they had taken pleasure and comfort in and it passed into the hands of strangers. Only the house and garden, one piece of ground and a Scroll of Law were assigned to the writer of these lines as his property. A new epoch began for us now, in which the hard blow we had suffered was in a measure softened for us.

Our eldest sister, Hannah (GREENEBAUM), now also deceased, was married during the life of our parents to my father's nephew, by the name of Benjamin Abraham (GREENEBAUM). These were the parents of the Reverend Dr. Elias GREENEBAUM, district rabbi in Landau.

At the time of the death of our mother, she (Hannah GREENEBAUM) was nineteen years old and was the mother in her eldest child (Dr. Elias GREENEBAUM), then three months old. Not alone that she nourished the little orphan at her breast as she did her own son during a year and a half, but all of the children found a home with her, and she took the place of a mother to all of us.

She devoted special attention to little Miriam (GREENEBAUM), who theretofore did not know the loss she had sustained and until her eighth year believed she possessed parents, and called her brother-in-law, father, and her sister, mother. At the time that this mistake was explained to her by an officious woman, her grief for the loss that she only then discovered was so intense, that it caused a scene of mourning not only for us all, but the entire neighborhood; it was like a day of mourning for one recently passed away.

In the year 1808, owing to an imperial decree, the Jews were obliged to take surnames, at which time the family of my father took the name GRUENEBAUM and my mother's the name of FELSENTHAL. The reasons for the choice of these names were that one of my father's ancestors had an inn, which bore a shield "Zum Gruenen Baum. The maternal ancestor was born in a region where high cliffs towered above the valley. The first name had also to be changed in many instances, as only those names were allowed that appeared in the calendar, my name was changed to Jacob and in this manner I was called Jacob GRUENEBAUM.

At the same time there began for me a new period of life. It was the wish of my guardian, Nathanael GRUENEBAUM of Winnweiler, that before my tenth year I should leave my home, where under the care of my sister I had not yet experienced the greatness of my loss. They brought me to my uncle, David FELSENTHAL, who lived in Odenbach-on-the-Glan, one and one-half leagues from Reipolskirchen, as there was a better school at the former place.



Although I was among friends and lacked nothing, and was under good supervision in every respect, everyone will appreciate that I began only now to feel the loss more keenly, and envied other children who were under the protection of their parents. Even here the fostering care of my sister Hannah did not end. She came often to look after us, exercising a supervision necessary to children of that age.

May the Heavenly Father grant her a happy hereafter for all this loving care! I remained for years without interruption in Odenbach. I suffered and endured much; the memory of those days pains me to this day, and I could tell several things, but purposely refrain from dwelling on this epoch. Hardly had I attained my fourteenth year, when I assumed my independence and sought little by little to enter into business. I began on a small scale, but after a few years I had acquired a knowledge of all the products of the region and did a considerable business in all articles.

Even if business was not brilliant in all times, I was successful on the whole, and in all enterprises I observed the words of Solomon: "*Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy purpose*

shall be established." In this manner, by my dealings, I became recognized by all who knew me as a trustworthy and honorable businessman. I found free access and friendly welcome in all gatherings, with favor accorded to few. But I also had to resist many temptations; whichever way I turned the toils of allurements were laid.

There are snares especially prepared for a youth who is without parents, or far away from them, and for one who is not wholly without means. They sought to entice me to games of cards, drinking bouts, and other forms of pleasure, but it always appeared to me as though I heard a voice, that I thought the voice of my sainted father, calling to me: "Do not follow them, the path leads thee to destruction." Strengthened by this admonition, I tried to avoid everything that might injure my character and be detrimental to my honor. It may therefore truly be credited, that God helps him who helps himself.

Moreover, what that period of my life taught me, is especially to be recommended to youth. It is, that abstinence is the mother of virtue and is a principle to be heeded during our whole life. Whoever cannot acquire this one, becomes prey to all vices. Faithful to this resolution and preserving in the conduct of my business, I continued the career I had begun until I was twenty and a half years old. Then a new epoch began for me. In order to record this fully, I must refer to the events thirty years earlier.



In the eighties of the eighteenth century Jacob ISAAC (FELSENTHAL) of Rathskirchen, of whom I have spoken before, gave his youngest daughter (Judith FELSENTHAL) in marriage to a young man by the name of Michael HERZ of Eppelsheim, canton Osterhofen, now in Rhenish Hesse. Michael HERZ was a man of experience in the affairs and carried on his business during a number of years most successfully, but in the beginning of the nineteenth century his circumstances changed. In the first place he suffered much through the war, and in the second place, through an unsuccessful venture, he sustained such losses, that in that short time nearly his whole fortune passed into the hands of strangers.

In spite of all these difficulties and in the dreadful plight in which he now found himself, he did not lose the presence of mind, and with renewed strength he faced the future with energy.

Michael HERZ and his wife had twelve children, two sons and ten daughters, who were all living when the parents departed this life. That the losses of fortune were all the harder to bear with such a numerous family of children needs no further explanation.

In spite of all hardships, their marriage was an exemplary one. Their dwelling was a true abode of contentment, and with confidence in God, he endured all with patience and submission. This man possessed every virtue. He was modest in his demands and faithful in the keeping of a secret and he was therefore the confidant of all in the surrounding country.

He was modest towards everyone and his word given was sacred. He would swear to his own hurt, whatever the cause for which his word was pledged. About the year 1808, his business affairs improved somewhat and he gradually began to recover his fortune; he conducted his business honorably, enjoying the confidence of everyone, until the middle of the twenties.

In the meantime, he married off six children, five daughters and the eldest son, which cannot be accomplished in Germany without means. As he had now no one to assist him in his business, and he himself became old and feeble, he was obliged to retire. He was well versed in the medical treatment of diseases in cattle and gave his services freely in the neighboring region. He had given his services gratuitously in his more prosperous days, but now his knowledge became partly a means of support. All the time which was not otherwise claimed, he devoted to the study of our Holy Law, in which he was quite at home.

I now return to an account of myself when I was twenty and a half years old. I was solitary and alone in life, with many a danger still threatening me, and no one near me who stood faithfully by my side. I resolved in July, 1817, to take a pleasure trip to Eppelsheim, partly to give myself a change of scenery, partly to visit relatives, the family above mentioned. It is only a distance of ten leagues and I had never been there before.

I do not wish to conceal either, what may have occurred to some, that I had a purpose in view; but everyone who knew my situation would not blame me, that I should have such intentions in spite of my youth.

I will therefore confess that the thought was not foreign to me, that among the many daughters of the worthy man it might not be impossible to find one, who would be a suitable companion for my whole life's journey, who would be at my side as my faithful spouse.

My meditations on this subject did not remain without success. I traveled thither and really found my Sara there. I was cordially received by my friends and stayed more than a week without disclosing my intentions, but through a later confession from her, I learned that the thought had not been a stranger to her either.

I made use of the time for observation, as Eleazer did with Rebecca. To avoid diffuseness, and considering it superfluous

to relate the progress of events, I will no longer conceal that I became betrothed to Sara HERZ, (daughter of Michael HERZ). As I write this, it is now forty and a half years, and today I thank the Lord for His provident care, in guarding me from disappointment in my expectations.

In the year 1819, in the beginning of January was our marriage. What happened in the meantime I will be pardoned if I do not explain. That at times the heavens seemed open and everything bore a bright and promising look, all will know, and they who have not had the sweet experience, may try for themselves.

It may seem strange to some that we were betrothed a year and a half, but this had its sad cause to the regret of both of us. We resolved to make our home in Eppelsheim; for this reason I had sold my property in Reipolskirchen, but when the civil marriage ceremony was to be performed, the Hessian government forbade it until I could bring a certificate of release from the Bavarian government; the latter would not issue it, until I could show definite acceptance by the former.

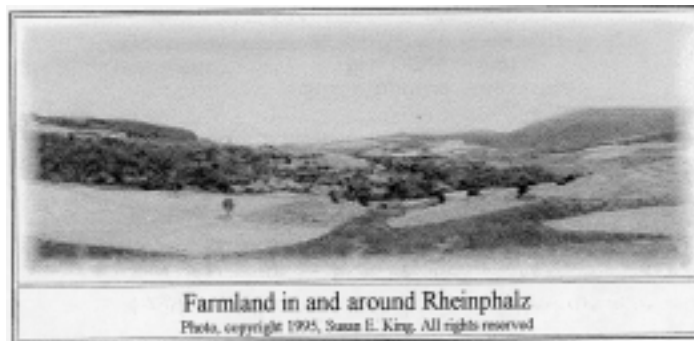
In this manner, I was chased to and fro for a year and a half, when the acceptance was sent me through the assistance of a lady, Madam Kallman of Darmstadt. Believing that now there were no further obstacles, we were married without waiting for the formal release from Bavaria, but this brought us still greater cares and worries.

We believe, now that we had achieved our aim, the unpleasant experiences were forgotten and happy days began for us; no dark clouds disturbed our domestic peace and all that we had suffered was forgotten. Not long were we

granted unalloyed happiness, and our joy was unexpectedly interrupted. It was before the end of the year 1820, and my dear wife had scarcely left her childbed, when I was summoned by a decree of the Bavarian government to serve as a conscript, and I had but a few days time in which to appear before the provincial commission at Kusel, a distance of eighteen leagues.

I responded to this call. What impression this trip made on us, especially my dear wife, every thoughtful person will understand. Fortunately, I drew a high number, at which even the commissioner and recruiting officer were pleased, for, if I had not drawn a number that freed me, they might have treated me as a deserter according to the law, because I had settled in another country, and they would not have allowed me to leave the place. The only thing then left me would have been to supply a substitute, which at the time would have taken the better part of my fortune.

After four sleepless nights, during which my wife sat weeping in her bed, I returned with the high number fastened in my hat. This number was also called, but in the meantime I had secured my release, thus escaping from this ill-fortune with the help of God. Now daylight began again to dawn in our home and even



if at times a sombre hour entered, it as a Goethe tells us; "if there were no rain, no one would appreciate the sunshine."

Thus we lived thirty-four years in Eppelsheim in uninterrupted contentment and found our happiness in ourselves and in the family circle in our house. I say the family circle in our home, as I can remember nothing enjoyable outside of that circle on the part of my co-religionists; they still looked upon me as a stranger, in spite of my activity in the community during many years, and as I was appointed by the government, in the early years of my sojourn, head of the congregation, their behavior was like that of the men of Sodom towards Lot, when they said; "This fellow came in to sojourn and he will needs be a judge." I might write down much about this, but as it is the place where my dear wife was born, I shall refrain on her account. They could harm me but little; the more hostility they showed towards me, the more I was honored and respected by the non-Jews.

Our marriage was not only a happy one, it was also blessed by the Lord. However, a man can not always be joyful; as Goethe says, "human life is mingled with sorrow." To us also at time a sad fate was allotted by the all-beneficent One; in spite of sorrows, our contentment was not lessened, our attachment to one another became all the greater and we found consolation in one another. Patience and resignation in the will of God and His counsels gave us great strength and courage.

We (Jacob GREENEBAUM and Sara HERZ) had thirteen children, nine sons and four daughters, of whom five were torn from us by death, by the decree of the Heavenly Father. This is the order of their birth and those designated by a cipher rest in peace in the sod of our old home; Marian, 1:0, Leah, 2:0, Elias, Michael, Hermann, 3:0, Benjamin, 4:0, Isaac, Henry, Abraham, 5:0, Hannah, Barbara and David. Marian died in her twenty-second year as the betrothed of Leopold GUTHMAN of Hamm on the Rhine. She died in consequence of a disease of the liver. The second child died was only granted a few days of existence. The third died in his seventh year of inflammation of the brain. The fourth, nine years old, died of kidney trouble; both were promising lads of exceptional beauty. The fifth was seven months old and died of convulsions while teething.

They were truly sad events in our wedlock and caused us great grief; those losses did not destroy our happiness, they only

served to increase our devotion. We accepted joy and sorrow patiently and praised God as well for the evil as for the good that we experience; yet it cannot be denied, sad memories cannot be suppressed.

As for my means of support, soon after my marriage I engaged in the iron business in which I received some favors from the foundry of Herrn VON GIENANTH, who had been an acquaintance of my father's. This business I continued without interruption until the time of my emigration, which occurred in 1852, and with the same firm with whom I had dealings in the beginning, I continued until I gave up my business and likewise my customers remained faithful to me through all these years, a special source of satisfaction for me when I emigrated.

In the year 1829 I began to deal in rags, combined with the notion business, as it was customary in that part of the country, which lines I also continued successfully until my emigration.

In regard to the education of my children, it was always my intention, as far as their qualifications and my means allowed, to have them instructed in all that would make of them good citizens, honorable men of business and economical managers and in general to have them trained, that they might be able to support themselves in any part of the world to which their fate might lead them.



Where the Greenebaums and Strauses lived.
The actual area is enclosed in a circle

This was indeed a difficult undertaking, as I had no opportunity for this in our home town. Our sages said, in all that is done with pure intention, help comes from above. We too entered upon our task trusting in God, and help really came to us from above. In order to achieve our purpose, we were early compelled to send our children to school in other cities.

They utilized their time in a manner which gave great satisfaction to their teachers and to ourselves. It did indeed cause my dear wife and myself many a sleepless night, as all expenses had to be drawn from the business, and we had to exercise great self-denial and deprive ourselves of much. We always hoped that the seed-corn we scattered would at some time bring fruit and that we could then exclaim, "He who endures to the end will be crowned with success," which had always been verified, the Lord be praised.

The management of my business during these many years, though successful, entailed great exertions at all times and I had no one to help me but my dear wife, who always stood

beside me as a faithful companion; she attended to everything while I was taking business trips, which occurred frequently.

In August 1843, my Jacob left school; he tried to familiarize himself gradually with all that the business required and soon stood energetically beside me. In the course of a few years, he was able to undertake the most difficult tasks, that until then had weighed almost entirely on me alone. I gave him general power of attorney that he might represent me in all courts; he undertook the work gladly and looked upon it as a pleasant duty, for which credit must not be denied him to this day by his dear mother and myself, as well as by his brothers and sisters.

In May 1833, my father-in-law died at the age of seventy-two. Formerly our dead had to be taken to Osthofen for burial, more than two leagues away. This was a sad sight to me, even at the beginning of my sojourn in Eppelsheim. To change this procedure I worked quietly for a long time, but the rest of my coreligionists did not wish to change for fear of committing a sin and believed they were compelled to use the cemetery where their fathers rested, for all time.

At last in the year 1831 through a promulgation of a governmental force, the old cemetery at Osthofen was transferred to a more northerly site, when I and a few others took measures and received a concession from the government to establish a cemetery in a legal manner.

My father-in-law (Michael HERZ) was the first who there found his resting place; he was buried with great solemnity with tolling of bells, and so it is

done to this day, that bells are tolled while an Israelite is carried to his grave. The community received at that time two new bells, which were acquired through voluntary subscriptions, in which the Jews showed themselves generous. Through the death of my

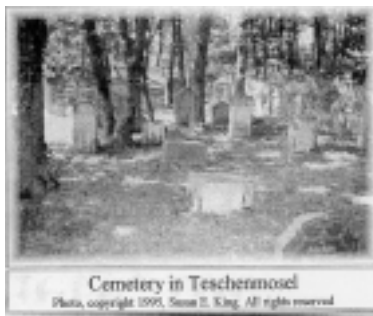
father-in-law, I found

myself called upon to assume new responsibilities. My mother-in-law (Judith FELSENTHAL), who was also my aunt, was now left with five unmarried daughters and one son, the youngest of all, helpless and without means. Without considering my own business and my large household, I assumed the task of making her affairs my own. I spared no pains and did everything that was to her advantage.



Cemetery in Teschenmosel

Photo, copyright 1995, Susan E. King. All rights reserved



Cemetery in Teschenmosel

Photo, copyright 1995, Susan E. King. All rights reserved

Herein also I found again that where there is a pure intention, help comes from above. All that I undertook for her succeeded and with God's help, four daughters were worthily bestowed in marriage. The older daughter, Hannah (HERZ), who was the second oldest, was an invalid. The son, (Jacob HERZ - anglicized to HART) the youngest of all the children married under my guidance. Mother and daughter lived with me until they passed into a better life beyond.

In May 1837, I was attacked by a severe illness; I lay unconscious three weeks and all doubted the possibility of my recovery. I myself gave up all hope and was ready for whatever pleased the Lord. My Elias was fifteen years old at the time. He was the eldest of my sons and was at this epoch in school in Kaiserslautern. The distress in my family was great, but the beneficent Father heard the prayer of my dear wife and the pleasing of my children, and I recovered entirely under the care of a competent physician, with the help of God.

That my dear wife (Sara HERZ) was overwhelmed with the duties during this time, goes without saying; the big household, the business, the farm, the correspondence, all were under her supervision; at the same time, rarely was anyone allowed to give me medicine or nourishment but my wife or my daughter Marian (GREENEBAUM).

In the year 1844, at the beginning of October, my mother-in-law (Judith FELSENTHAL) died, also at the age of seventy-two; and in the spring of 1851, my sister-in-law Hannah (HERZ) died at the age of fifty-eight, after many years of illness under our roof. The consciousness of having done my duty will comfort me in my last hours, and continue for me a pleasant remembrance.

For this time until we emigrated, we enjoyed constant good health, the Lord be praised, and no misfortune disturbed our contentment. Business continued its regular progress and our possessions were in a flourishing condition. In the meantime, my Isaac also began to help. He proved capable and worked hand in hand with his brother. We now began new lines of business in grain and other agricultural products, in which they were active and capable. During our stay in Eppelsheim, although we had many expenses that others are spared, we had acquired a fine house arranged as a farm house, several gardens, twenty-eight Hessian acres, with all agricultural implements, all that was required.

Although this was purchased with proceeds of the business, it could only be accomplished by a thriftily managed household and economy of all things.

From all this it may be seen that there was no necessity for emigrating in our case. Neither struggle for our existence nor anything that displeased us in our old home could have been the motive for this step; besides there were the most promising prospects in financial matters. That path was now cleared that at the beginning had cost me much toil and trouble, coming among strangers to a strange region when I was twenty-two years old and standing quite alone.

There are, however, other causes that influence men to take steps not demanded by necessity, which was in fact our case. My Michael (GREENEBAUM) had leaned the tinsmith trade according to his own wish, and he had worked for a time as apprentice after having learned the trade. His year of travel as a journeyman was due to begin as soon as he completed his 20th year, and had been freed from conscription.

Traveling as a journeyman is an absolute necessity for the artisan, without which preparation he would never be regarded as a worthy master of his trade. The conscription passed luckily for him. In the meantime he had agreed with two young men, also Israelites, who were in the same train, that they would emigrate to America, if they were freed from conscription.

Michael consented on condition that his parents gave their consent. All three young men really were free. Now Michael revealed his plan to us and bade for our consent, with the promise to return in four or five years. The matter seemed quite feasible, as there were then hard times in Germany, and his dear mother and I saw him in our thoughts wandering from city to city, with his knapsack on his back. Therefore we gladly yielded to his wish, thinking to see him again at home in a few years.

Now preparations for his departure were begun and after he had made for me quite a stock of stove pipe, he entered upon his journey in July, 1845. Parting was hard, but the hope of a reunion helped us to bear our sorrow.

When we received his first letter, we had to begin to relinquish the hope of his return; he wished that one of his brothers would come to him, that it might probably be advantageous of us all to come later, planing emigration for us as a matter of course.

After my Elias (GREENEBAUM) had left school in Kaiserslautern, I had him instructed in business methods, and he served his apprenticeship several years as clerk and traveler for the house of Machol and Sons in Eppelsheim. In the autumn of 1846, one year after Michael's departure, we resolved to call Elias home, in order to strengthen our own business through his presence. He answered our summons and came home after the end of his contract on January 1, 1847.

But hardly was he initiated in our own business when he expressed the wish to go to America also for a few years. We could not resist his pleading, in spite of the fact that we had enlarged our business and needed him very much, especially as we were always tormented by the thought that his brother was alone in a distant country, and we yielded to his wish.

In July, 1847, he entered upon his journey. There were again troubled times for us, until we received a letter and were convinced that both brothers were together.

My Henry (GREENEBAUM) was at that time fourteen years old and was at school in Kaiserslautern. It was my intention to let him study law. Scarcely were the two brothers together and settled in Chicago, when they wrote that I should send their brother Henry, with the promise to provide for his further education and to furnish all funds for his studies.

This was asked repeatedly and Henry seemed willing to go. As I always complied with the wishes of my children, in so far as I considered them to their own advantage, we at last fulfilled their wish. We therefore took Henry out of school in 1848, embraced an opportunity to let him travel in September with an estimable family from our town, which I would not have permitted, if it had not been in the year of the revolution, and I thought this one too would be in safe harbor for the present.

As soon as he had taken his departure, his dear mother and I began to repent of what we had done and nothing in the world would have brought us again to this resolve, if we could have had him back again. Restless days and sleepless nights now insured, in which our eyes were seldom free from tears. The reproach which my conscience always uttered, to have subjected a youth of fifteen to such dangers brought me almost to despair.

In this condition we were obliged to wait three whole months until we received his first letter from this side of the ocean. My unrest and anxiety were now partly ended, knowing him under the supervision of his brothers; but perfect contentment never returned. The dear mother yearned for her sons, the children still at home, for their brothers.

As there could be no further hope of a return and my children would remain separated for all time, some in Europe, some in America, I at last formed the resolve to accede to the wish of my children, and go to America with all of them, that they might live together in harmony with united strength.

Although my business grew daily, my farm flourishing and confidence in the state of affairs increased daily, I began in the year 1849 to prepare for departure and took three years to regulate my assets and liabilities. When my project became known, there arose from every side attempts to dissuade us, every one spoke of our prosperous condition and disapproved of my leaving a safe harbor to go towards an insecure one.



Chicago from Saint Mary's College - 1849

By. N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints & Photographs, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox & Tilden Foundations

There were so many seeking to dissuade me, that I really began to waver. The plan was good nevertheless, and I thereby came into possession of many outstanding accounts, which I might not have received in years. When a letter reached us in the beginning of 1852, in which I was informed that my Henry would come in the following spring, with the intention of accompanying us on the journey, the wish to see my children grew and the

yearning for the land of freedom increased. Thereupon I at once held public sale of my goods in February and in the course of three months repeated this, holding four sales in all, until the movable property and realty were sold.

In the beginning of May, Henry arrived after a perilous voyage. The captain became insane during the journey and the ship was nearly wrecked, but through the help of Providence, it was discovered in time to avert the threatening danger, and Henry arrived safely at our home.

The joy which his arrival was greeted by all may be experienced, but cannot be described. We now worked with great energy to hasten our departure as much as possible.

The beginning of July, 1852, we bade farewell to our home, where we left so many friends, who grieved at our departure. We sailed on the ship St. Nicholas, Captain BRAGDEN. The sea voyage lasted thirty-eight days and was on the whole an agreeable one. There were three hundred and fifty passengers on the boat, among them about seventy Israelites. The daily occurrences were noted in a ship's journal, edited by Jacob, Henry and (Leopold) GUTHMAN, which contains some comic incidents, and may be read to this day by anyone interested. No one died on the ship and no one was dangerously ill. Our two sons, Elias and Michael, had married before we came here and we found them and their wives well and happy and in prosperous circumstances. The joy of meeting need not be described; everyone can imagine how great it was.

It is now six and a half years since we left the old home; although I enjoyed much there that I am deprived of here, I have never for a moment desired to return; neither would I allow such a thought to arise in me. Life among my children, and the harmony that reigns among them, their endeavors one for the other, not only render my sojourn here agreeable, but make the dear mother and me most happy, and in the continuation of this happiness we look forward to a serene old age.

Still I am not one of those who scornfully turn their backs on the old home. Although I do not wish to return, at times my thoughts dwell upon the country that gave me birth, upon its inhabitants among whom I dwelt so peacefully, upon all those friends whom I left, and who to this day keenly feel and deplore our separation; and the land in whose bosom so many near and dear found their last resting place, parents and ancestors, children, brothers and sisters. May the beneficent Father grant His aid to those that are still among the living and give eternal peace to those that have returned to dust. Amen!

Now, my dear children, I have informed you fully as to the life of your parents up to our time of our arrival here, September 3, 1852. What has occurred in the meantime to this day, is known to all of you. Should the Heavenly Father grant us the favor to abide another ten years among you, I promise you that I will give you further account, so far as my mental faculties permit.

You can also gather from this narrative, with what care we brought you up and nurtured you, and with what exertions and even privations we provided for your education, as far as our circumstances permitted, and finally that we might not be sepa-

rated in different continents and only for this reason, we took the perilous journey to America.

For all this I demanded nothing of you except unity among yourselves; by firmly holding together you can defy all dangers that threaten you. I repeat it once more, your keeping together in love and harmony will be a strengthening balm for our old age, and the opposite, which I hope will not come to pass, would darken the remainder of our existence.

Therefore, follow my admonition - it is the only one I can recommend to you - and I do not know how long it will be vouchsafed to me to call your attention thereto, but when my last hour strikes and the power of speech fails me, this will be my last thought. Remember, therefore, my children, the words of your father, spoken to you on the fortieth anniversary of his marriage to your dear mother, that we may have the joy which David speaks: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*"

This is the message of your father,
JACOB GREENEBAUM

Chicago, January 20, 1859
and 15th of Sh'bat, 5619

Notes by John H. Rubel: Michael Greenebaum (1824-1894) became a tinner and plumber after his arrival in Chicago (in 1848). Active in the Abolitionist movement, he led a crowd that freed a slave held prisoner by a US Marshall (1853). He founded and was the first president of the Hebrew Benevolent Society (1854), (along with his brother Elias, my great-uncle Moses Rubel, Mayer Klein, married to my great-aunt Hannah Rubel and Isaac Wolf, married to Esther Rubel, another great-aunt), and a founder



The Michael Greenebaum Family
Left to Right; standing: Mose, Henry, Henriette, Theresa,
Mary, Gus
Seated: Ben, Father (Michael), Hannah, Rose, Mother
(Sarah Spiegel), Helen
Photo courtesy Bloch Publishing

of the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Historical Society, the Astronomical Society, the 82nd Illinois Volunteer Regiment of Veterans (of the Civil War); and the Ramah Lodge of B'nai B'rith... He also founded and was the first president of the Zion Literary Society (1877). (Encycl. Judaica, v.7 p 809).

-- Elias Greenebaum (1822-1919) worked for two years in a dry goods store after coming to Chicago (he arrived in April 14,

1848. (Meites, p 48) and then became a clerk in the banking house of Richard K. Swift. In 1855 he and Henry founded Greenebaum Brothers Banking House. In 1877 Elias organized the banking house under the firm name of Greenebaum Sons, which subsequently was incorporated as a state bank in 1911 under the name Greenebaum Sons Bank & Trust Company. The name changed to Greenebaum Sons Investment Co. in 1921. Through consolidation it became successively the Bank of America, Central Trust Co. of Illinois, and Central-Republic Bank & Trust Co. Greenebaum and Associates and the Greenebaum Mortgage Co. still existed in 1970. Elias Greenebaum led the adherents of the Reform group when Chicago's only (at the time) congregation of Kehilath Anshe Maarav (K.A.M.) split into Orthodox and Reform factions. He was a founder of the Juedischer Reformverein (1858-61), which founded Congregation Sinai (1861). He was director, treasurer, and Vice-President of this congregation at various times. (Enc. Judaica v.7 p 910) He married Rosina Straus on March 3, 1852, with whom he had three sons, Henry Everett, Moses Ernst and James Eugene, who were associated with him in business, and one daughter, Emma E. (Mrs. Goodman). Elias Greenebaum took an active part, during the ninety-seven years of his life, in the civic and communal affairs of Chicago. A man of honor and influence, he was a vital factor in the growth and development of Chicago. (Meites, p 48)

-- Henry Greenebaum was born in Eppelsheim, Germany, June 18, 1833, and came to Chicago October 25, 1848, where for many years he was the leading spirit on the Jewish life of the city. His business activities were varied. He became a hardware salesman in the establishment of W.F. Dominick, and after two years there entered the employ of R.K. Swift as a clerk, where he learned the banking business. Four years later he and his brother Elias organized the firm known as Greenebaum Brothers, and still later he became president of the German Savings Bank. Among the numerous organizations which owe their existence to a great extent to this energetic man are the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Historical Society, the Astronomical Society, the 82nd Illinois Volunteer Regiment of Veterans, Ramah Lodge No. 33 and several congregations which he helped establish in various parts of the city. He served the City Council as alderman for the Sixth Ward, was president elector on the Douglas ticket, represented Cook County on the first Equalization Board in 1856, and was a member of the West Chicago Park Commission. In 1855 he married Emily Hyman of New York, and after the death of their only child, one year after its birth, they raised some of their orphaned nephews and a nieces, bestowing upon them the love and care of real parents. Nor did his bounty demand blood ties! Many artists and musicians who are well known and prosperous today owe their education to the generous and foresighted couple who determined to do for other children what they were denied the privilege of doing for their own. Busy as he was with his philanthropic life, his communal activities demanded even more of this time and seemingly unlimited energy. He was at various times first president of Zion and Isaiah Congregations, first president of District Grand Lodge No 6, I. O. B. B., founder and first president of the United Hebrew Relief Association, secretary and honorary member of Congregation B'nai Sholom, and an honorary member of the Jochannah lodge. (Another minor personal note: he was also a

Director of the Chicago Cutlery Manufacturing Co., later the American Cutlery Manufacturing Co., of which my great-uncle Ruben Rubel was also a director and his brother Moses Rubel, Secretary). His life was devoted to service, for the city, for the Jewish community, and for individuals who came to his notice, and at his death, on February 2, 1914, Chicago lost one of her most honored and loyal citizens.

Henry, with many others, lived through the catastrophic Chicago fires of 1871 and the second one in 1874. Then came the "Hard Times" of 1877 (which were) felt by all, but it was the irony of fate that Henry Greenebaum, the man who had done most for the community, would have been dealt the hardest blow of all. The failure in 1877 of Henry Greenebaum's banks -- the German National and the German Savings -- two of Chicago's strongest banking institutions surprised and shocked all. The failure was due to heavy real-estate investments in the Humboldt Park district whose business and residential growth Henry Greenebaum anticipated. Failing to realize cash on these great and valuable holdings, when money tightened, the banks were unable to meet their obligations and were obliged to suspend business. The liabilities of over a million dollars, however, Henry Greenebaum assumed personally, all depositors being paid in full. His entire fortune was swept away and he found himself (at the age of 44) obliged to start all over again, after he had accumulated a large fortune and attained a leading financial standing in the community. Pluckily he faced the sudden change in his material condition, in adversity as in prosperity showing the same magnanimous and unconquerably cheerful qualities, and by the manner in which he strove on won even greater esteem and admiration than had been his before. (Meites, - 136).

Encyclopedia Judaica, Deter Publishing House, Ltd. 1971.
Meites, H. L., ed. 1924, HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF CHICAGO, Chicago Jewish Historical Society and Wellington Publishing, Inc., Chicago, Illinois; ISBN 0-922984-02.

Note from Joan: On April 5, 1871, Lazarus wrote to his in-laws in Otterberg wishing them Passover greetings and blessings. "Do not have much time left over - it is the holiday. This evening Seder we have Heinrich Gruenebaum and wife from Chicago and his brother David Gruenebaum and wife as our guests." Heinrich is the Henry Greenebaum, son of Jacob, who is mentioned in this article. David is his youngest brother.

I have included the complete text of this lengthy "reminiscence" for many reasons. First; this memoir affords the reader a detailed picture of the lives and the feelings of an 18th and 19th century German Jewish family. It is easy to imagine their way of life from the wonderful descriptions written by Jacob. It is clear that their faith was an important factor in their lives. Second; this is the family of Lazarus Straus' mother, Johanette Greenebaum, and so these people and their stories are important to the history of the Straus family. Third and most important; the articles in this issue of the newsletter have a theme; family values, love, honor, and a commitment to one's beliefs that were/are paramount within this extraordinary family. The importance of this should be illustrated and exemplified at every opportunity.

Yesterday and Today

Oscar Solomon Straus & Oscar Solomon Straus III

Oscar S Straus began his autobiography, "It has been permitted me to do useful work and to have interesting experiences. Happy opportunities have been afforded me for public service."

Oscar Solomon Straus, born on December 23, 1850 in Otterberg Rhenish Bavaria, was the fifth child of Lazarus and Sara Straus.



He emigrated to the US in 1854 with his mother and siblings, arriving in New York aboard the steamship St Louis. His father was waiting at the pier for them, having emigrated two years earlier. After waiting several weeks for an epidemic of yellow fever in Talbotton GA to clear up, they traveled by ship, rail and coach to their new home.

Oscar was treated to a secular and religious education. On July 17,

1865, Lazarus wrote, "I want Oscar to go through all schools since he enjoys learning." Oscar's oldest brother Isidor strongly supported Oscar's desire to attend college, law school and to enter public service.

After the family's move to New York, he attended Columbia Grammar School, College and Law School. His distinguished career began at the firm of Hudson & Straus but, after his weight dropped to 105 lbs, he was advised to give up trial law. He joined the family firm, L. Straus & Sons. "I was economically independent as a single man and could devote my time to the law for its own sake. This I preferred to do ... But as a business man things were different, and I decided now to marry." On April 15, 1882, Oscar married Sarah Lavanburg in New York. Daughters Mildred and Aline were followed by son Roger Williams, named for the champion of religious liberty.

Shortly after his graduation from law school, Oscar became interested in public spirited undertakings. His illustrious career included three appointments as Minister to Constantinople, appointment as Ambassador to Turkey and as Secretary of Commerce and Labor, serving under four presidents. He was president and cofounder of the American Jewish Historical Society, Chariman of the Public Service Commission and Minister to the International Court of Arbitration at The Hague.

Sara and Oscar lived in their New York apartment and in their house in Purchase New York, now owned by their grandson Roger Williams Straus Jr. Oscar's sympathy toward man, warmth and humor cannot be overlooked. This man, honored by many, surely exemplifies all that is good. His grandson Oscar S. Straus II wrote, "He was an exemplary, unselfish, devoted public servant, comfortable on the world stage but equally willing to serve the needs of his immediate community." It is because of family members like Oscar Solomon Straus that the Straus family has earned its place in American history.

Oscar Solomon Straus III bears a striking resemblance to his great grandfather and namesake. Born in Washington DC on June 3, 1942 to Oscar Solomon Straus II and Marion Miller, Oscar is an only child. His father was serving in the US Foreign Service at the time and was stationed in Washington, but returned to New York in 1945 where the Straus family was centered and where Oscar III was raised. He attended Collegiate School until eighth grade and St. Paul's School in Concord NH, graduating in 1960. In 1961 he married Geraldine Coors Jr. whom he had known for many years from ski trips to Colorado. By 1967 Oscar had graduated from the University of Arizona and was the father of William and David. The family lived in Kuala-Lumpur Malaysia while Oscar worked for a tin mining company. After their return to New York, he worked with his father in a minerals exploration company until late 1973 and then returned to tin mining where he remained until 1978.



In 1983 Geraldine Coors died. Oscar must have spent some time reevaluating his goals and priorities because he decided to enter law school, something he had thought of for quite some time. While attending Brooklyn Law School he met fellow law student Sarah Barish. He graduated in 1985 and the couple married in 1986. They are the parents of Daniel and Adam, ages ten and seven, respectively. Oscar became involved with a legal service clinic providing free legal services to the elderly poor while he was in law school. He stayed with the clinic through May 1987, ending up as their director and managing attorney. Then he took two years off while Sarah returned to work as a corporate attorney. Oscar played "Mr. Mom," a role for which he is well-suited. He is the proud grandfather of Meghan and Laura.

These days, Oscar is the director of the Elderly Project with Volunteers of Legal Service. The organization provides volunteer attorney *pro bono* legal services for Manhattan low-income seniors. His family divides its time between their New York City apartment and a weekend home in Red Hook NY. They also spend a month in Chester Nova Scotia where Oscar's mother spends her summers.

His professional career tells us that Oscar has followed in the footsteps of his namesake. He has been a staunch supporter of those in need, providing legal services to the elderly and indigent. He is also a dedicated father and husband, not adverse to taking on the responsibilities of childcare. He is the treasurer of the Straus Historical Society and has been instrumental in seeing to it that we are fulfilling our fiscal mandates. He has certainly carried on the spirit and tradition of his great grandfather Oscar Solomon Straus. The opening words from his great grandfather's autobiography could equally have been written by Oscar III.

The Talbotton GA Home of Lazarus and Sara Straus

Michael H. Buckner, board member of the Straus Historical Society and co-president of Historic Talbotton Foundation was kind enough to send photographs of the house in which Lazarus, Sara and their children lived while in Talbotton. When the Straus family visited Talbotton in October 1997, the owner, Frances Callaway Aldrich, did not want us to visit her home, explaining that she had not been able to keep it up and was embarrassed to have visitors. Mrs. Aldrich and her cousin Jean Battle Coolik have since passed away. The current owner, Robert Aldrich, son of Mrs. Aldrich, has allowed Mike access to the house. The following are some of the stories Mike sent along with the photographs.



The left side of the house shows an add-on bathroom near the chimney. The el at the rear is the original kitchen, formerly detached from the house. It was later attached with an enclosed porch and walkway.



The side porch almost everyone uses these days. It was on these steps that Jean Battle's father was killed by his brother-in-law in 1927, the same day the Strauses went to Atlanta for the opening of the new Davidson Department Store and then visited Talbotton. Mike wrote, "Thank goodness there was no killing in '97; maybe we've changed our luck."



The steps from the present kitchen and the door to the cellar. It is a brick-walled cellar with shelves for canned goods and a pit for ice (right). Large blocks of ice were covered with sawdust and put in the ground and would last several days, even in the hottest weather.



The slave house

Lazarus and Sara, while against slavery in principle, did own slaves who they taught to read and write. When the Strauses moved north, the two youngest slaves came with the Strauses because they were too young to be on their own and had no family.



The front porch with "Sheaf of Wheat" pattern railing which is very common on a house of this age in Talbot County.

We are indebted to Mike for sending these interesting photographs and for telling us about of the history of the house. We hope more stories will follow.

L. Straus & Sons Candelabrum at the Hershey Museum

In past articles for this newsletter, I have described a beautiful 12 foot candelabrum cut by L. Straus & Sons for the 1893 Chicago Exposition. Craig E. Carlson wrote: "There are 1,329 separate pieces of solid crystal, which were handled, cut, and fitted together to form what is considered to be the largest single specimen of cut glass ever produced at the time." There are 42 arms, 30 of which hold 16 candle power electric lights. On these arms hang richly cut bells, chains, pendants, rosettes, and other devices or attachments, all of exquisitely executed novel shapes. The cutting was in Straus' "Americus" pattern, a brilliant and tasteful design that admirably lends its beauty to such a work as the candelabrum.



Reprinted with permission by the Hershey Museum
Hershey's 1020 Chestnut Street warehouse
and chocolate-making showroom

concern. The Hershey Company's Philadelphia chocolate-making showroom and import warehouse at 1020 Chestnut Street displayed the candelabrum from 1901 to 1904. In 1909 it was installed in the Hershey home, High Point Mansion, where it remained until 1937, when it was moved to the Hershey Museum of American Life.

Craig and I have been in contact with John H. McMahon, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, Amy Taber and Tanya Richter of the Hershey Museum in Hershey PA. Our original request was to visit the museum where we wished to see the candelabrum personally. After an exchange of letters, photographs and articles, Craig visited the museum. He was thrilled to meet



Reprinted with permission by the Hershey Museum
L. Straus & Sons candelabrum on
display at the Hershey Museum

Wilbur Kreiser who, for many years, has been the primary person responsible for cleaning and restoring the "torchere," as it is called in Hershey. Wilbur had many personal stories to tell about the candelabrum.

After a morning informational meeting, the museum officials took Craig to see the L. Straus & Sons masterpiece, which he describes as breathtaking. They then brought him to the back room where they clean the candelabrum and store some extra pieces not currently in use. The Hershey Museum has some original drawings for some of the lights and how they were designed. These pieces will be placed in a special display cabinet near the candelabrum.

Craig has been invited to speak about L. Straus & Sons and about the candelabrum in Hershey on Sunday, September 24th.

Members of the family and friends are invited to attend. The Hershey Museum is located at 170 W. Hersheypark Drive, Hershey, PA 17033. Phone 717-534-3429, Fax 717-534-8940. Watch for a flyer with further information and driving directions.

ACGA's Straus - Macy Rich Cut Glass Catalog

A new Straus - Macy Catalog was introduced at this year's American Cut Glass Association convention in Cosa Mesa, CA in July. Craig E. Carlson, the brilliant researcher of L. Straus & Sons cut glass, along with the Catalog Committee and the Research and Information Committee of the ACGA, have compiled an extraordinary catalog of Straus cut glass patterns.

Craig has done extensive research into the relationship between L. Straus & Sons and R. H. Macy's. The records of both concerns have been destroyed with regard to their glass cutting operations and so it was necessary for Craig to piece the story together through archival material, advertisements, catalogs and newspaper articles. In a June 30, 2000 letter Craig wrote; "The catalog represents the cut glass produced by the New York City firm of L. Straus & Sons. ... they began cutting glass at Macy's as early as 1880. In 1888, the same year the Straus family purchased half ownership of the R. H. Macy department store, they opened a second cutting shop in New York City to serve the clients of L. Straus & Sons." Craig has documented the businesses of both the Macy's cut glass operation run by Lazarus Straus and sons and the L. Straus & Sons showroom



and warehouse in lower Manhattan. This catalog presents photographs and illustrations of cut glass patterns created by both businesses.

The cut glass reproductions in this new ACGA catalog have been assembled through photographs of the actual advertisements in Macy's catalogs as well as from illustrations that appeared in the trade journals and in various reference books. It was necessary to produce a compilation catalog because many of the original catalogs could not be located and are presumed lost. An advantage of this format is that all of the illustrations of a period are gathered together and many new illustrations of L. Straus & Sons cut glass are shown for the first time. If you have been following my previous articles about Craig and his work, you know that he has identified the Straus trademark thereby enabling researchers, for the first time, to definitely establish the patterns belonging to the firm.

This catalog is unique. The Straus illustrations are displayed by the factory in existence at the time the illustration was published. Where available, the actual words used to describe the pattern have been provided. The Macy illustrations are grouped according to the source date of the original Macy catalog and are fully indexed by pattern and article type. This new catalog is a major step forward in the documentation of the Rich Cut Glass of L. Straus & Sons. It is available from the American Cut Glass Association, a not-for-profit organization. Write to the attention of Kathy Emmerson, P. O. Box 482, Ramona, CA 92065-0482. The cost is \$30 each including shipping and handling.

"Surprise to Nathan Straus"

From *The Pottery, Glass & Brass Salesman*,
August 10, 1911, page 11.

"On the eve of his departure for Europe on a mission of philanthropy for President Taft, a surprise farewell banquet at the Kaaterskill Hotel was tendered to Nathan Straus Saturday night and a handsome loving cup, in which each of the 600 guests had some part was given him. The presentation was made by M. H. Grossman, who paid tribute to Mr. Straus' service in saving the lives of thousands of children.

"The speakers' table was decorated in greens under a bower of flags. One of the features of the occasion was a parade of fifty children with dolls, who escorted Mr. Straus to his seat."

The text of this article was sent to me by Craig E. Carlson who asks if anyone in the family knows what became of this loving cup.

Oscar S. Straus address

From *American Spirit*, May 22, 1907, page 222.

"An unprejudiced study of immigration justifies me in saying that the evils are temporary and local, while the benefits are permanent and national."

Altschuler and Maas Relatives

Meet the Kohns Family

Written by Otto and Helene Altschuler
Edited by Joan Adler

(Note: Mark Altschuler contacted me two years ago, asking if the Strauses in the historical society were related to the Kohns family. His interest was in finding descendants of Clara Kohns, who sponsored his family when they emigrated to America. Her generosity saved their lives. Otto told me a delightful story about how they left Czechoslovakia with little



Otto Altschuler

more than the hand tailored tuxedos they brought because they knew they would be dining with their benefactress and wanted to be suitably attired. The following article was written by Otto and his wife Helene following the meeting of the Kohns, Altschuler and Maas relatives.)



Herbert Altschuler

On Sunday, June 4th, Joan Adler arranged a delightful get-together with Gail Nutku and her daughter Rana, Daniel Kohns and his wife Jennifer, all descendants of Mrs. Lee (Clara) Kohns, the most gracious benefactor and sponsor of Max, Suse, Herbert and Otto Altschuler and some of their relatives.



Mark Altschuler



Edith Mendel

The meeting took place at the beautiful home of Edith Maas Mendel and her daughter Marcella Sabo in Livingston, NJ. This was a first meeting for Otto Altschuler, his wife Helene and their son Mark with the descendants of the Kohns family. They had stimulating discussions about their experiences in New York in 1939; the Altschulers stayed in the Park Avenue apartment of Clara Kohns for two weeks after leaving Hitler occupied Czechoslovakia. Lively conversations about each generation's American experiences filled a most congenial afternoon. Edith and



Marcella were gracious hostesses which added to the enjoyment of the occasion.



Helene Altschuler

After their meeting Mark wrote; "It was a wonderful, intense, learning, bonding experience." Daniel Kohns also wrote to let me how much he and his wife Jennifer enjoyed the visit. All agreed to meet again.

Friends of Straus Park

by Leon Auerbach, Edited by Joan Adler

In this our third year, Friends has tried to continue and enlarge our ongoing plan to maintain the initial beauty of the Park, enhance its growth with the care of John Olund, our gardener/horticulturist and encourage the Park's use and the involvement of its neighbors.

Friends of Straus Park (FSP) has been honored by two grants for tree hoops and Belgian Block surrounds for 12 trees in the Park. We received a grant for \$3,000 from the City Parks Foundation and an additional \$10,000 grant from the office of Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields. Ms. Fields has been particularly generous in her support for this project, an area represented in City Council.

Our benefit concert was hosted by Omus and Jesse Hirshbein in their elegant home on May 5th. A broad variety of musical styles were performed by neighbors. Judy Tobey entertained us with marvelous cello pieces accompanied by John Olund at the piano. Ms. Tobey played selections by Bach, Fauv^re and Kreisler. Judy Bro, a renowned theatrical vocalist sang love songs of the Twentieth Century. Pan-Wen Wei, a pianist of Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall fame, ended the evening with the music of Mozart and Liszt. The concert was followed by local desserts and fine wines presented by members of 'Friends.' It was an evening of fine taste for everyone.

Rain in buckets washed out our 85th Anniversary Celebration in the Park on April 15th as well as our raindate, May 22nd. The same storm kept everyone from our Spring Planting on May 21st. We defied the overcast skies by going ahead with our Botafogo Concert in June. Suzy Schwartz and her quartet played soft Bossa Nova for an audience that grew as the weather improved. In July we had perfect weather and perfect music; Chris Cherney once again led his group "The Ellington Project". The audience of 200-250 neighbors and friends filled the Park with pure joy. A marvelous success! With fingers crossed for more good weather, we scheduled our next concert on August 16th. Peter Spink and his Jazz Trio played in the Park to a delighted audience. It was a wonderful evening. Our 3 summer concerts reinforce the popular use of the Park and the loyalty of our appreciative neighbors and friends.

IMPORTANT NOTE! Our Fall Event "The Fourth Art In The Park" on Saturday, October 14th, raindate October 15th, is a wonderful celebration of art, music, dance and food. It should be another exceptional party.

We will be ending the year with an evening in November with our board member Andre Aciman reading from his books. Andre is a Professor at Bard College, a fellow of the New York Public Library's Center for Scholars and Writers and an acclaimed author. His new book, False Papers, is being published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Our Annual Board Meeting will also be held at the end of the year. At that time we will review our activities of the past year and plan for 2001. We hope to see many more of you enjoy Straus Park and participate in our events.

Available from the Straus Historical Society, Inc.

"The Autobiography of Isidor Straus" privately published by Sara Straus Hess, in softcover - \$30.00

"Genealogical Miscellany" a family genealogy compiled by Robert K. Straus with addenda - \$35.00

Large black & white photograph of the Lazarus and Sara Straus family taken at Elberon NJ in 1905 - \$40.00

Color photograph album of the Straus family's trip to Talbotton and Columbus GA, October 24-26, 1997 - \$40.00

Color photograph album of the Oscar S. Straus Memorial rededication ceremony and reception, October 26, 1998 - \$35.00

Videotape of the Oscar S. Straus Memorial Rededication Ceremony - October 26, 1998 filmed by Alan F. Hockstader - \$20.00

Videotape: "Titanic on Broadway," a television special about the making of the Broadway play which includes Joan Adler speaking about the Straus family and a CNN segment in which Paul A. Kurzman is interviewed regarding the play "Titanic" - \$20.00

Send your check to Joan Adler, payable to the **Straus Historical Society, Inc.**, P. O. Box 416, Smithtown, NY 11787-0416. A receipt will be issued for your purchase and for your contribution to the Society. You can contact Joan Adler by phone: 516-265-0383, fax: 516-724-4487 or e.mail: famjad@aol.com

Board Meeting - May 5, 2000

A Straus Historical Society, Inc. meeting of the board of directors was held Monday, May 15, 2000 at the office of Oscar S. Schafer, 1114 Avenue of the Americas, New York City. After a light supper, the board got down to business with board members Jack Schafer and Tom Straus participating via conference call. This was the board's first attempt at using a conference call for out of town members and, unfortunately, Sara Byruck was inadvertently excluded. Oscar has promised to learn how to make a multi-caller conference call before the next board meeting which will also be held at his office in mid October 2000.

Business items discussed at the meeting include: a treasury and financial report, fundraising, the annual election of officers, the possibility of building a Straus Historical Society website, suggestions for future articles in the newsletter, and a report on some of Joan's current work. Please contact me if you would like to receive a copy of the minutes from this meeting or any other SHS board meeting.

