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Sigmund Feinberg: Story of his Death as told in Frances Kallison's book *100 Years of Jewry in San Antonio*

Just as matters were progressing so well for the Feinbergs, Sigmund had a quarrel over a dog with another Jewish immigrant from Russia, one Benedict Schwartz, who had arrived in San Antonio about 1854. Local legend has it that the quarrel resulted in a duel between the two men, with Feinberg dead, at the age of 30 years, as the result. This legend arose from the quaint picture of two gentlemen in Victorian dress, long frock coats and high "stove-pipe" hats, with pistols pointed at each other, carved in a charming, circular bas-relief on Feinberg's tombstone. However, according to the Memoirs of Mrs. Rosa F. Liebenstein, Feinberg's daughter, Schwartz shot her father from ambush, as he returned home from his place of business and was crossing his threshold on the evening of December 10, 1857.

An investigation of the Bexar County Criminal Court Records revealed no information at all. Nor could any mention of this affair be found in any of the San Antonio newspapers of that day. The probate of Feinberg's small estate was located; but it contained no word of the manner in which he met his death. It would seem that no charges were filed against Schwartz, much less was he brought to trial!

Even though there were no official records of this tragedy, there is one line in the Hebrew poem, carved on Sigmund's tombstone, that gives a clue that this was no duel, but an outright, malicious murder.

"And innocent blood shall not be spilled in Israel."

Regina Feinberg was so incensed over this incident, that she erected a wall around the Feinberg family's burial plot, so that Schwartz could never lie near them. She need not have worried; Schwartz survived Feinberg by twenty-five years. The tiny Jewish community of the 1850s had grown during that period, so that Schwartz's grave was a long distance from the Feinberg family plot.

This incident, while so tragic, is worthy of mention for two reasons. First, it demonstrates how quickly these Jews, who were courageous enough to leave behind family, friends and beloved associations in the ghettos of Central and Eastern Europe to come and settle in the rough frontier, became assimilated into the mores of the society in which they lived. Second, it corrects the myth that first came the Sephardic Jew, then the German or Central European Jew, and lastly the East European Jew, as though waves of immigration can be so neatly classified, like geological strata. Although in the earlier period East European Jews did not come in such large numbers as they did after the pogroms of the 1880s in Poland and Russia, the Central European Jews came to America from the very first, along with the Sephardic; and the East European Jews from Russia also began to come very early in our nation's history. Perhaps the East European Jews were more reluctant to leave home, because they were more tradition oriented and more observant and pious, in the majority than their brothers further West. The Sephardic Jews did outnumber others in the earliest years of immigration to this country, and Central European Jews came in great numbers in the decade of the 1840s, 1850s and until the 1880s, when the flood of Russian and Polish Jews fleeing the pogroms outnumbered all others; this has caused some Jewish historians to stratify the waves of immigration according to national origins.

Scavenger Hunt Items

- ☐ 2 urns for stones
- ☐ 4 headstones with pictures of the deceased on them.
- ☐ A headstone with an open book on it
- ☐ A headstone with a menorah or Shabbat candles on them
- ☐ Find 2 penguins
- ☐ The First Commissioner of Boy Scouts in Bexar County and do a rubbing of the plaque
- ☐ A tombstone that has a picture of two hands shaking
- ☐ 4 different depictions of trees on headstones or at the graves
- ☐ A headstone that has a depiction of a cloth draped on it or on an urn
- ☐ 4 headstones of infants or babies
- ☐ 5 different countries that people came from
- ☐ A headstone with a different language than Hebrew or English
- ☐ A headstone that shows a picture of a duel and do a rubbing of it
- ☐ A trombone and do a rubbing of it
- ☐ A veteran
- ☐ When was the cemetery founded?
- ☐ Find a bird on a headstone
- ☐ Find a bushel of grapes
- ☐ Find faces of 2 women with closed eyes next to one another guarding
- ☐ What is the most recent burial at this cemetery?
- ☐ Find a headstone with the word "love" on it
- ☐ Do 2 rubbings of a hard to read headstone until you can see what it says.
Take a picture of the headstone with the rubbing next to it so we can see the difference

Reading Hebrew Tombstones

Jewish tombstones with Hebrew inscriptions have an added value to genealogists, in that they not only show the date of death and sometimes the age or date of birth, but they also include the given name of the deceased's father. This permits you to go back one more generation.

Here are a few helpful pointers if you cannot read Hebrew.

- At the top of most Jewish tombstones is the abbreviation פ'נ, which stands for *po nikbar* or *po nitman*, meaning "here lies".
- At the end of many Hebrew tombstone inscriptions you will find the abbreviation ה ב צ נ ת, which is an abbreviation of a verse from the Bible, the first book of Samuel, 25:29, "May his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life".
- If any Hebrew characters at all are written on a tombstone, they are most likely to be the person's Hebrew name. A Hebrew name always includes a *patronymic*, the person's father's given name. This is a unique feature of Jewish tombstones, and a great boon to Jewish genealogy.
- The Hebrew word בן, *ben*, means "son of", as in "Yaakov ben Yitzhak", meaning "Yaakov the son of Yitzhak".
- The Hebrew word בת, *bat*, means "daughter of". On tombstones, these words will often appear as ב'ר, an abbreviation for *ben reb*, meaning "son (or daughter) of the worthy", followed by the father's given name. The word *reb* is a simple honorific, a title of respect — it does not mean Rabbi.

Jewish Cemetery Symbols and Their Meanings

JEWISH CEMETERY SYMBOLS AND THEIR MEANINGS

Gravestone in the shape of a tree trunk often for someone who dies young.



Frequently appears at the bottom of Jewish gravestones. Each letter stands for a word.

תנצב"ה

"T'Hay Nafsh(o)(ah)
Tz'ror B'tzror Hakhayim"
"May (his) (her) soul be bound up with the bond of life."

Frequently appears at the top of Jewish gravestones.



The 2 letters stand for "Po Nikbar" which is Hebrew for "Here is buried."



A draped urn or vessel on top of a monument is symbolic of the body that houses the soul. The draping is a sign of grief.

Grave of a Levi



The Levi would assist the Cohayn in his holy tasks by washing his hands

Grave of a Cohayn



The priest (Cohayn) holds his hands this way when blessing Israel.



A Mausoleum is a stone structure for above ground burials, often used as a family lot.

ACORN

"From little acorns giant oaks grow"
Symbol of greater life after burial.



BALL

Cycle of life - also symbol of eternity.



VESSEL

The body is considered the vessel that holds the soul.



A lamb at the gravesite of a small child is usually found on older, Victorian-era Jewish cemeteries.

- the shofar (ram's horn) indicating that the deceased was a blower of the shofar
- deer: people whose name is Zvi, Hirsch or Naftali (deer representing the tribe of Naphtali)
- lion: people whose name is Aryeh, Judah, Leib or Loew (lion representing the tribe of Judah)
- bear: people whose name is Dov or Ber.
- wolf: representing the Tribe of Benjamin
- books: an open book indicates the presence of a rabbi, an officiating minister, or just a scholar
- fish: zodiac sign for the month of Adar
- bird: appears on the gravestones of many women
- grapes: cluster of grapes is an emblem of Israel.



Candesticks. Most common symbol at the gravesite of a Jewish woman as a symbol of her piety. Most of the candesticks have three branches but there are ones with two, five and more. A broken candle on a gravestone symbolizes an early death, at a young age.

Susane "Suzy" Josephson Finesilver (1916-2015)



Susane "Suzy" Josephson Finesilver passed away February 1, 2015. She was born in San Antonio, Texas May 9, 1916 and lived here for her entire life. She would have celebrated her 99th birthday this year. She adored her family, enjoyed many friends and was an inspiration to all of them. Her sparkling eyes, bright smile and love for life will be greatly missed.

She was a longtime supporter of the arts, nationally, as well as Texas and San Antonio. She served on the National Advisory Board of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington DC and was one of the museum's founders more than 25 years ago. She also was a founding board member and former vice president of the museum's Texas Committee. She was a board member of the Southwest School of Art and Craft, now known as the Southwest School of Art. She was a member of the School of Visual Arts Board at the University of North Texas in Denton. She also served on the boards of the Mid-America Arts Alliance and Texas Arts Alliance. Suzy was a National Patron for Americans for the Arts and a former board member of the American Council for the Arts. She was a member of the Prince of Wales Foundation for many years. She also was a patron of the United World Colleges.

Suzy was the 1997 recipient of the Girl Scout Trefoil Award. She was a board member of the Ecumenical Center for Religion and Health. At the McNay Art Museum, she served as Patron Council founding chairman, president of the Gallery Support Group, and board member of the Friends of the McNay Art Museum. She also was very involved with the San Antonio Museum of Art, the Witte Museum and the San Antonio Symphony League. She was a member of the Metropolitan Opera National Council, Cancer Therapy and Research Center Cabinet, American Association of University Women and the American Museum in Britain. She served on the San Antonio Performing Arts Association board and was founding chairman of the Associates of the San Antonio Performing Arts Association. When Beverly Sills formed the National Opera Institute, Suzy was invited by her to become a Fellow. She was a member of the Metropolitan Opera National Council and was a founding member of the San Antonio Opera Guild Board. She also was involved with the Southwest Foundation Forum. She was president of the Joffrey Ballet Committee of San Antonio. When the Girl Scouts of America chose the National Museum of Women in the Arts as their art project, the museum asked its Texas Committee to start the program and Suzy was designated chairman. This program became the model format used throughout the United States.

She has been a member of Temple Beth-El for more than 70 years and was a member of the Temple Beth-El Sisterhood and the National Council of Jewish Women. She is a Life member of the Santa Rosa Children's Hospital Auxiliary and was board chairman of the Christmas Clearing Bureau. During World War II, she was a Grey Lady for the Red Cross and U.S.O. Travelers Aid. She was honored as an Outstanding Volunteer at the First Annual Salute to Outstanding Volunteers by San Antonio Homes and Gardens Magazine 1985-86. Suzy had a musical education and played piano, clarinet and saxophone. She was a 1934 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School and attended the University of Texas at Austin where she studied education. She enjoyed travel and took many trips all over the world.¹

Susane "Suzy" Josephson Finesilver had a passion for the arts.... She was "a relentless supporter of the arts in all its forms," said longtime friend Charlie Lutz. "She was ... determined

¹ From her obituary

to share the joy of that appreciation with others.” Her enjoyment of her mission was so obvious, “people just gravitated toward her,” her daughter Lynn Finesilver Crystal said. “She was so very involved; she made it more fun and lively for people to be involved.”

The daughter of Romanian immigrants, Finesilver was raised in Monte Vista, attending Jefferson High School when it was brand new. Accomplished with clarinet, piano and saxophone, Finesilver performed at school, and was also invited to play with what was later to become the San Antonio Symphony.

Graduating in 1934, Finesilver attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she met her future husband, whose family owned Finesilver Manufacturing Co. The couple married in 1937, beginning a union that spanned almost 55 years.


When World War II started, Finesilver volunteered with the American Red Cross as a member of the Gray Lady Service. “She used to go to the burn wards and read letters to the soldiers, those who were blinded,” Crystal said. They soon learned to recognize Finesilver by the scent of her perfume.

Later, she began her work with the Metropolitan Opera National Council, invited by Margaret Tobin, a founding member....Also instrumental in establishing the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., Finesilver served on the National Advisory Board and was a founding board member and vice president of the museum’s Texas Committee, often working with then-first lady of Texas, Laura Bush.

Finesilver also knew the Prince of Wales, attending the annual patron dinner for his Prince of Wales Foundation, which he’d invited her to be involved with when starting it in the late 1970s.

“People in all walks of life really cared, because she cared about them,” Crystal said. “It was something about her — people would pour out their lives; she would listen and make them feel better about themselves.”²



 This page and opposite: Photographs of the Finesilver Manufacturing Company in San Antonio, at one time one of the largest clothing manufacturers in Texas. PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF SUZIE FINESILVER AND LYNN FINESILVER CRYSTAL.

And, the next year, 1897, saw the unfolding of a different kind of industry for San Antonio. Abraham Finesilver that year founded the Finesilver Manufacturing Company on Cameron Street as the first clothing manufacturing firm of its kind in Texas and for many years the largest employer in San Antonio, with about 1,000 employees.

When Finesilver died in 1946, his two sons, Hertz and Mervin, took over the business and expanded it. Originally the plant produced pants and overalls, but ballooned into making denim jeans, matched pants and shirts, khaki ranch pants, bush jackets and flannel shirts. Chain stores, including JCPenney, Sears, Montgomery Ward and C. R. Anthony, marketed Finesilver products under their own brand name and independents sold them under the Finesilver trademark. In World War II, the company became a large supplier of military uniforms. The firm also had plants in Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia.

In 1966, according to Lynn Finesilver Crystal, the daughter of Hertz Finesilver, the San Antonio plant gradually shut down manufacturing operations and was used as a distribution center for its products. She noted that all Finesilver products were manufactured in the United States and the company never unionized.

Mervin Finesilver died in 1988 and Hertz Finesilver in 1991, and the company ceased business in 1993. In the mid-1990s, Hertz Finesilver's widow, Susane Josephson “Suzie” Finesilver, and Lynn Crystal, sold the Cameron Street building and it became a multi-tenant office space for various businesses.

Through a number of years, San Antonio sported a number of companies in the clothing manufacturing business, including Juvenile Manufacturing Company, founded in 1923 and which later became Santone Industries, Kingson Manufacturing Company, Sol Frank Military Uniform Company (founded in 1910) and American Overall Company. And, finally,

Levi Strauss & Co., founded in 1853 in San Francisco as the first company to produce blue jeans, in the fall of 2003 laid off about 800 sewing-machine operators, fabric finishers and other plant workers in its San Antonio plant, which it had operated for a quarter century. Thus ended the reign of all the Levi companies in the United States, as operations were moved overseas.



MAKING SAN ANTONIO: The Story of San Antonio Manufacturing
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² Heidbrink, Mary M. “Finesilver was tireless supporter of the arts.” *San Antonio Express-News*. 4 Feb 2015



Joseph "Joe" Freeman (1885-1971)³

S.A.'s Joe Freeman Dies at 86

Joe Freeman, one of the driving forces behind the San Antonio Livestock Exposition and Rodeo, died Saturday at Santa Rosa Hospital. He was 86.

Freeman was largely responsible for the erection of the county coliseum which was named after him in 1958 by Bexar County Commissioners Court. In naming the multi-million rodeo and livestock center after Freeman, the commissioners acknowledge his "untiring personal efforts and unselfish and liberal donations" to the building of the coliseum which opened Feb. 17, 1950 to the First Annual San Antonio Livestock Exposition and rodeo.

At the time of his death, Freeman was life chairman of the annual stock show and rodeo and chairman of the board of the coliseum....

The story behind one of the founders of San Antonio's popular rodeo and stock show began in 1885 in an adobe house on S. Main Avenue. When Joe was still a small boy, the Freemans moved to Seguin. When his father died in 1905, Joe and his brother, Harry, consolidated the family's business interests which eventually grew into a multi-million dollar operation ranging from oil to an automobile dealership to ranching. It was 1925 when the Freemans returned to San Antonio and it was here where the brothers businesses thrived.

Joe Freeman attended old Sealy College in San Antonio.... Later, as the family's business interests drew, Joe found himself as a leading cotton exporter, a member of the New York Stock Exchange and New Orleans Cotton Exchange and he launched the first large-scale pecan-shelling operation in the area....

While operating Freeman's Leisure Hour Stables here Joe Freeman advertised San Antonio by exhibiting a collection of gating horses in cities from Louisville Ky. to San Francisco. One of his horses, Midnight Star, won top U.S. honors for three straight years. His interest in livestock and horses eventually found an outlet in 1945 when talk first began to build a county exhibit hall for rodeo and livestock purposes.

"San Antonio, in the geographical heart of the South Texas livestock industry, was the last remaining cattle center without a livestock exposition," Harry Freeman said, explaining why he and his brother worked so enthusiastically on the new coliseum.

In 1945 Joe Freeman had been taken seriously ill when talks about the livestock exhibit hall began, but four months later, he was out of the hospital and pushing for work on the coliseum, which finally got underway in 1940 (sic). He and his brother had organized the Farm and Ranch Committee of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

His many civic and business activities during his busy lifetime saw him serving with or receiving awards from numerous civic and professional groups including the chamber, the San Antonio Automobile Dealers' Association, the Dairy Products Institute of Texas, the Exchange Club, the Advertising Club, the board of the Green Hospital and others. But undoubtedly the greatest monument to the life's accomplishments of Joe Freeman is the 174-acre facility on E. Houston Street which boldly bears the name: Joe Freeman Coliseum.

³ *San Antonio News Express* (San Antonio, Bexar Co., TX), Sun., 1 Aug 1971, p. 1A, c. 3-5 & p. 2A, c. 2-3.

Mayer Halff (1836-1905)^{4 5}

Mayer Halff, merchant and rancher, was born on February 7, 1836, in Lauterbourg, Alsace-Lorraine, France, the second of three brothers who immigrated to Texas. He received his education in Europe. In the mid-1840s an older brother, Adolphe, had moved to Galveston, where he sold merchandise from an ox wagon and on horseback. After several years he sent for Mayer, who arrived in Galveston in 1850. Six years later Adolphe and Mayer moved to Liberty, forty miles northeast of Houston, and opened a mercantile store. That year, while on a buying trip for goods, Adolphe died when his ship sank during a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico. In 1857 Mayer's nineteen-year old brother, Solomon Halff, arrived, and they formed a partnership, M. Halff and Brother. Mayer, who had accepted cows in payment for goods, began to buy grazing land. He managed the ranches, while Solomon minded the store. In 1864 they moved from Liberty to San Antonio, where they opened another M. Halff and Brother dry-goods store. When some of their customers offered to pay their bills in cattle, the Halff brothers moved into 19th century Texas' most famous industry, ranching. Solomon ran the wholesale dry goods business, which became the largest supply house in the southwest, while Mayer focused on their cattle interests.



At one time Mayer and Solomon owned more than a million acres of West Texas land on various ranches from San Antonio to Fort Stockton. They also were partners in a Wyoming ranch, the Laramie Cattle Company. Mayer Halff was among the first ranchers in Texas to bring Hereford cattle to the state. His son Henry M. Halff purchased prize Hereford bulls in Iowa for the ranches. During the golden era of the cattle kingdom, the Halffs drove thousands of longhorns up the Chisholm Trail to market in Abilene, Kansas, and one year they and their cowboys branded 35,000 calves on their ranches, which ranked third in the nation for cattle production. Mayer was a founder of the City National Bank of San Antonio, where he served as president and with Solomon founded the Alamo National Bank. They not only financed early cattle drives, but Mayer rode on them. The Halff's ranching empire did not continue long in the 20th century. Solomon left the business in 1900, and Mayer's sons eventually sold off most of their ranching interests.

He was an active member of Congregation Beth El. He married Rachel Hart, and they had four children. He died on December 23, 1905.

⁴ <http://www.isjl.org/texas-san-antonio-encyclopedia.html>

⁵ <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fha16>

Solomon Halff (1838-1905)

Solomon Halff, merchant, was born in Lauterbourg, Alsace-Lorraine, France, on May 8, 1838, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Halff. In 1857 he immigrated through Galveston to join his brother Mayer Halff in his wholesale dry-goods company in Liberty, Texas. The brothers formed a partnership, M. Halff and Brother. Before Solomon arrived, Mayer, who had been in Texas for seven years, accepted cattle in lieu of cash for payment of bills. Afterward, the brothers divided their business managements. Mayer managed the ranches he had accumulated, and Solomon managed the store. In 1864 the brothers followed the ranching business to San Antonio, where they moved their store, headquartered their ranch, and enlarged their merchandising business. The wholesale dry-goods company became one of the largest of its type in the Southwest, with salesmen covering the state. Solomon became prominent in lodge, society, and religious circles. He served as a founder of Temple Beth-El in San Antonio. He was a member of B'nai B'rith. In 1902 he retired from the wholesale dry-goods company to work full-time as vice president of the Alamo National Bank, a bank he and Mayer founded. He became president and controlling stockholder in the A. B. Frank Company, a wholesale dry-goods firm; his son G. A. C. Halff later became president. Solomon Halff married Fannie Levi of Victoria, Texas, on November 15, 1871. They had five children. G. A. C. Halff pioneered in the merchandising business as had his father. He organized one of the first automobile dealerships in Texas and in 1911 founded the first wholesale outlet for auto supplies. In 1922 he founded radio station WOAI, San Antonio, which began broadcasting on September 25, 1922, one of the first broadcasting stations in the United States. Solomon Halff died on May 29, 1905, in San Antonio. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery there.⁶



⁶ <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fhadz>

Anna Goodman Hertzberg (1862-1937)^{7 8}

Anna Goodman was born in New York in 1862. She became an accomplished pianist at an early age. In 1882, Eli Hertzberg, a successful jeweler and Russian immigrant, was traveling on business to New York from his home in San Antonio, Texas. During a meeting with friends, he was distracted by music coming from a neighboring apartment. He insisted that his friends introduce him to the music-maker. It was Anna Goodman, who was twenty-two years his junior. Anna Goodman and Eli Hertzberg were wed within a couple of weeks.

When Anna Goodman Hertzberg relocated to San Antonio with her new husband, she became nostalgic for the cultural life of New York and felt out of place among San Antonio's "booted, hell-for-leather citizenry." Instead of sulking in the clash of cultures, Anna Goodman spent a half-century promoting European classical music. There were a few fledgling orchestras and opera houses in San Antonio at the time, but their quality was unremarkable and their appeal was limited. Anna was equally determined to enrich the city's cultural tapestry and escape the dullness of her privileged domestic life. In 1901, she recruited her sister and four other women to form the Tuesday Musical Club, an all-women's chamber music society. The Tuesday Musical Club was the first women's music association in Texas.



For the first stage of its existence, the Tuesday Musical Club met at Anna's home. The early members were talented amateur musicians who, because of the ethos of the era, were discouraged from playing professionally. Concerts were open to the public and on occasion featured noted guest artists. In 1930 the Tuesday Musical Club purchased the house next door and christened it the Anna Hertzberg Hall of Music.

Anna Goodman Hertzberg also had a busy life of social activism. Among other things, she was Founding President of San Antonio's Council of Jewish Women. She was President of the Texas Free Kindergarten Association, and a member of the Business and Professional Women's Association. Anna Goodman Hertzberg was the first woman elected to the local school board. She was San Antonio's Chair of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the World's Fair held in San Francisco in 1915. Anna was also President of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs from 1911 to 1913.

One of Anna's aspirations was to create an attractive space for public concerts. She suggested to city officials that an amphitheater be built in Brackenridge Park, a 343-acre midtown property donated by George Brackenridge in 1899. The venue was named the Sunken Theater Garden upon its completion in July of 1930.

In 1950 a new Tuesday Musical Club building was constructed on St. Mary's Street, just a few addresses from Brackenridge Park. The building was dedicated as the Anna Hertzberg Music Memorial. Both the building and the Club remain active.

⁷ <http://www.isjl.org/texas-san-antonio-encyclopedia.html>

⁸ <http://www.jmaw.org/anna-goodman-hertzberg-and-the-tuesday-musical-club-of-san-antonio-texas/>

Harry Hertzberg (1883-1940)⁹



Harry Hertzberg was a prominent San Antonio lawyer, civic leader, and state senator who established The Hertzberg Circus Collection and Museum, a department of the San Antonio Public Library. One of only a handful of circus collections, it is the oldest public circus collection in the United States and one of the largest in existence. Hertzberg was an avid circus fan who accumulated American circus and related popular-culture memorabilia; he was also a prolific collector of rare books. He bequeathed both of his collections to the San Antonio Public Library, where he had served as member of the board of trustees. His purpose in collecting circus

memorabilia was to pre serve a record of the history and contributions of the circus to American culture and society; this is the main focus of the museum.

In 1942 the San Antonio Public Library formally dedicated the two collections.... After the dedication the circus collection's size and scope was increased by purchases and donations from circus performers and fans, many of whom were friends of Hertzberg.¹⁰

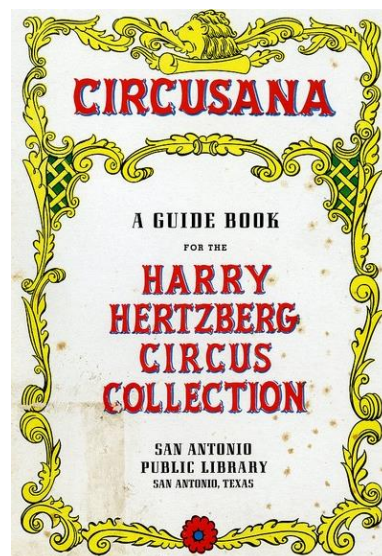
In 1995 the Circus / Popular Arts Collection and Archives consisted of more than 42,000 items on the American circus during its heyday from the first performance in Philadelphia in 1893 to roughly the late 1930s: artifacts, programs, prints, posters and handbills, photographs, and other memorabilia, as well as



sound recordings, sheet music, correspondence, scrapbooks of newspaper and magazine clippings, books, videotapes, magazines and professional journals, and unpublished manuscripts. The strength of the collection lies in the extensive rare poster and photograph holdings. The museum also houses a specialized library devoted to the American circus and popular culture that contains nearly 3,000 titles, including many rare books.

The Rare Book Collection contains close to 15,000 volumes in fields such as art, religion, biography, history, costume, and literature.

In 2001 the city of San Antonio closed the Hertzberg Circus Collection and Museum. Harry Hertzberg indicated in his will that the Witte Museum should receive his collection should the city not retain it. In 2003 the Witte Museum received his collection.



⁹ <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lbh04>

¹⁰ Front cover of the guide book for the Hertzberg Circus Collection, 1943. Image courtesy of the [Ringling Art Library](#). Image available on the Internet and included in accordance with [Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107](#).

Alexander Joske (1858-1925)

Julius Joske, the founder of Joske's department store, once "the largest store in the largest state," was born in Birnbaum, East Prussia, in 1825, the son of Abraham and Rebecca Joske. Julius emigrated from Germany to San Antonio in 1867 and established his first store on Military Plaza. For six years Joske accumulated money before selling the business and in 1873 returning to Germany to close his house there. He brought his wife, the former Henriette Wolfsohn, and five children to San Antonio later in the year and



reestablished his business. After his sons, Albert and Alexander, entered the firm, it was renamed J. Joske and Sons. Two years later Joske moved to Alamo Plaza across from the Menger Hotel site, and later to a larger site on the plaza. After Julius' retirement in 1883 the firm came to be known as Joske Brothers, and in 1903 Alexander Joske purchased the interests of his father and brother. Julius Joske died in 1909.¹¹ In 1929, the store was sold, and was later bought by Allied Stores, who built Joske's into a chain of department stores across Texas.¹²

Alexander Joske, as sole authority, proved to be an energetic and aggressive businessman. He undertook another expansion project in 1909. With the construction, Joske Brothers occupied all the property on the Alamo Street side of the block, with the exception of the Plaza Theater. During the 1910s and 1920s, growth in San Antonio and at Joske's went hand in hand, but several Joske's employees saw an opportunity to take the skills they learned working at the store and begin their own companies. Many stores in the 1920s gave Joske's a run for its money, because three national chain stores opened in San Antonio during this time, too: J. C. Penney in 1921 and Sears Roebuck Company and Montgomery Ward's in 1929. The location of the department stores in downtown San Antonio created a shopping and fashion district along Houston Street. Since many of the new stores starting up in San Antonio sold women's fashions, Joske's opened a dress shop for women who wanted to select fabrics and have dresses made by a French dressmaker, which targeted upper-class women.

The increased competition of the 1920s moved Joske's to undertake more aggressive efforts to develop its staff. Management sent employees to the East Coast to work in a national chain where they learned about store operations and

¹¹ <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fjo76>

¹² <http://www.isjl.org/texas-san-antonio-encyclopedia.html>

organization. Alexander Joske also made sure that his store kept the feel of a family run store by working on the sales floor himself to ensure people's experience at Joske's was a pleasant one. Joske's also competed through involvement in the community through event sponsorship.

Then in 1923, Joske's reached a milestone with its golden anniversary, and publicized that it was the only department store or dry goods store in San Antonio to operate for fifty consecutive years. The store celebrated its unparalleled retail success in the region based having the largest selection of merchandise in Texas and the largest floor space of any retail store in the entire Southwest. "In relation to its volume of business to the population of its trade territory, it was one of the largest stores in the country."

However, the second half of the 1920s brought loss, sorrow and many changes to the Big Store. In the summer of 1925, Alexander Joske took ill, apparently suffering a nervous breakdown. Friends and family, including his son-in-law Dr. Fredrick G. Oppenheimer, a local pediatrician, encouraged him to rest, but he would not relax his efforts and continued to work many long hours at the store. His condition did not change, and on Wednesday evening, July 8, 1925, alone in the upstairs of his mansion on King William St., Joske shot himself. A servant found him dead with a bullet wound in his side.

Alexander Joske's death shocked the city and retailers state-wide. In mourning, Mayor John W. Tobin honored the merchant and community leader and ordered city flags flown at half-mast. Joske Brothers Company closed for two days, while throughout the Southwest people remembered Joske as a pioneer merchant who had played a key role in the transforming Texas retailing industry by leading the change from dry goods stores of the last century to the modern department store of the twentieth century. (Picture above is the funeral procession of Alexander Joske passing Joske Brothers Co. July 10, 1925.¹³)



¹³ <https://digital.utsa.edu/digital/api/singleitem/image/p9020coll008/2342/default.jpg>

Francis Elaine Rosenthal Kallison (1908-2004)

Frances Rosenthal was born in 1908, in Fort Worth, Texas. She earned her Master's Degree in Biblical Archeology from Trinity University in San Antonio. Her thesis project was called *100 Years of Jewry in San Antonio, TX*.

Frances Rosenthal Kallison helped found the San Antonio Visiting Nurses Association. She was a member of the San Antonio Conservation Society. In 1948, she served as the Captain of the Bexar County Women's Sheriff's Posse. In 1976, Kallison was commended by the Commissioners Court of Bexar County. She was named a "*Hidalgo*." Kallison founded the Happy Hours Preschool for blind children. She also organized school supplies and clothes for poor children so that they could start the school year with their educational necessities covered.

Frances Rosenthal Kallison was a member of the National Council of Jewish Women in San Antonio. She served as President of the local chapter and was Regional Director of the NCJW in the 1940s. Francis Rosenthal Kallison was a founding member of the Brandeis Women's Committee, both locally and nationally. Kallison was a member of the American Jewish Historical Society. She was appointed to the board in 1966 and wrote many articles for the AJHS. Frances Rosenthal Kallison founded the Texas Jewish Historical Society. She served as its second President. She was also a member of the Southern Jewish Historical Society.

In 1931, Frances Rosenthal married Perry Kallison. They had three children: Maryann, Perry M. "Pete" and Frances Ray "Bobbi."



In 2002, the Government Canyon State National Area expanded to include 1,161 acres of the Kallison Ranch due to the ranch's location above the recharge zone of the Edwards Aquifer.

Maryann, Francis & Pete Kallison, 1940's

Nathan Kallison (1873-1944)

Nathan Kallison was born in 1873, in Ladyzhinka, Russia. His parents were Moshko and Dina Kallison.

Nathan Kallison journeyed to America in 1890. He and his brother, Jacob Kallison, traveled separately, but were reunited in New York. Together, they went to Chicago, where their older cousin, Joseph Kallison, lived. There Nathan Kallison found work as a harness maker. He attended the Jewish Training School in order to learn English and American history. In 1893, Nathan Kallison opened his own harness shop. In 1894, the Kallison brothers brought their mother, Dina, to Chicago. In 1896, the Kallison family was naturalized as American citizens.



During the late 1890s, Nathan Kallison considered moving to Albuquerque and Arizona. Eventually, in 1899, they moved to San Antonio, Texas. Nathan Kallison opened his harness shop at 124 S. Flores Street. This shop – also their home – became a successful leather business. In 1908, Nathan Kallison extended his business to include ranching supplies and general merchandise. It became the leading farm and ranch store in south Texas. In 1910, Nathan Kallison purchased land in San Antonio for \$3.76 an acre, officially becoming a rancher.

Kallison taught himself about the science and practice of agriculture. He experimented with agricultural techniques and varieties of wheat – such as Abyssinian Duran — that could withstand extreme temperatures. The sign at the entrance to his ranch read: *“Established in 1910 for development of better farming and ranching.”* The Kallison family were agricultural innovators. For instance, theirs was the first ranch in Texas to grow flax. In 1914, the Kallisons moved to a three-story Victorian house at 701 San Pedro Avenue.

During the 1920s, Nathan Kallison renamed his store to Kallison's Department Store. Following a devastating flood in 1921, Kallison quickly rebuilt his store along with an addition that



incorporated much of the west side of the 100 block of Flores. It was all elegantly designed and called Kallison's Block.

While Kallison's Department Store closed in 1967, the building at 124 S. Flores remains – including the statue of a cowboy holding a saddle. In 2002, the Government Canyon State National Area expanded to include 1,161 acres of the Kallison Ranch due to the ranch's location above the recharge zone of the Edwards Aquifer.

Nathan Kallison had an Elementary school named after him. The dedication of the school occurred in the fall of 2017 and the school is located on his former ranch property. Rabbi Marina Yergin gave a blessing at the event to mark his Jewish involvement.

Perry Kallison (1903-1999)

Perry Kallison was born in San Antonio, Texas. He worked with his brother, Morris, in managing Kallison's Farm and Ranch Store (also called Kallison's Big Country Store), which sold everything from furniture to hardware to 'feed and seed' to appliances. Perry Kallison also worked at the family's ranch – riding horses, experimenting with crops and raising cattle. Among other breeds, he raised a large herd of award winning American Polled Hereford cattle.



When the State of Israel was founded, Perry Kallison helped it develop its agricultural systems. He arranged for Israelis to visit San Antonio so that they could learn from the Texas ranchers. He also sent a herd of 76 angora goats to Yodfat Kibbutz, which were shared with other kibbutzim. In 1936, Perry Kallison started a radio program that provided farm and ranch news, philosophical editorials ("sermonettes") and other stories. His programs were broadcast until 1981.

Perry Kallison founded the San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo. He and his wife, Frances, hosted the show at their ranch. While in college, Perry Kallison joined the Temple League Players, a theatrical group in San Antonio. He served as President of Temple Beth El in San Antonio in 1948. He remained active on various synagogue committees for his entire life. Perry Kallison was President of the San Antonio Jewish Federation in the 1970s.



The genealogy section of the San Antonio Public Library archives the Kallison's family records, correspondence, etc. This collection takes up approximately 15 cubic feet.

(Picture to Left: BBQ at the Kallison Ranch)

Jacob “Jake” Karotkin (1886-1962)

Jake worked in the family's Karotkin Furniture Company in San Antonio. He was president & general manager by 1935.

Joseph “Joe” Karotkin (1888-1960)

Joe was secretary-treasurer of the family business, the Karotkin Furniture Company, San Antonio, in 1935.

Bernard Frank Karotkin (1912-1998)

Bernard graduated from TX Military Institute in 1928. He attended Lake Forest Academy in IL and the University of TX in Austin. Bernard operated the Karotkin furniture store until selling the business in 1969. In 1970, he started the K.B.F. Company, a mortgage lending firm. Bernard received the YMCA's Gene Holmgren Outstanding Lay Leadership Award, the National Conference of Christians & Jews Brotherhood Award, and the U.S.O. Certificate of Distinction. He was president of Temple Beth El 1953-55 and held leadership posts with the Northview Country Club, the San Antonio chapter of Brandeis University, and the Appliance Association of San Antonio. Bernard spearheaded the building of Temple Beth-El's Oppenheimer Chapel during his presidency.

Milton Karotkin (1912-1983)

Milton was the sales manager of the family business, the Karotkin Furniture Company, San Antonio, in 1935.

Stanley H. Karotkin (1923-2007)

Stanley was a life-long resident of San Antonio, the last surviving of the Karotkin third generation San Antonio family of brothers and sisters. He had a successful business career as President of Karotkin Furniture Company, former director of Zale Corporation, Church's Fried Chicken, National Home Furnishings Association and 1776 Restaurants. His community endeavors included President of the San Antonio Golf Association, and a director of Oak Hills Country Club and Santa Rosa Children's Hospital. Stanley will be much remembered for his zest for life, love of people, good sense of humor, positive attitude, and passion for all sports – especially golf. He was an avid reader, interesting and entertaining. Friends say Stanley always had a great story to tell.



EXPRESS and NEWS Sunday, Oct. 10, 1965 PA1

OUR FIRST STORE IN SAN ANTONIO... 1882

In the year 1882, the first Karotkin furniture store was opened in San Antonio. Today, the Karotkin family, third generation, proudly operates three great stores in San Antonio and one in Austin, Texas. At the outset it was realized that houses would not remain with just roofs, but homes of quality would require good taste in home furnishings and quality comparable to the fine homes of today. The Karotkin stores' high standard of quality and values make shopping a pleasure whether you visit the large Downtown store, North Star, or McCreless South — it will always be a pleasure to serve our southwest Texas friends!



KAROTKIN'S — Downtown



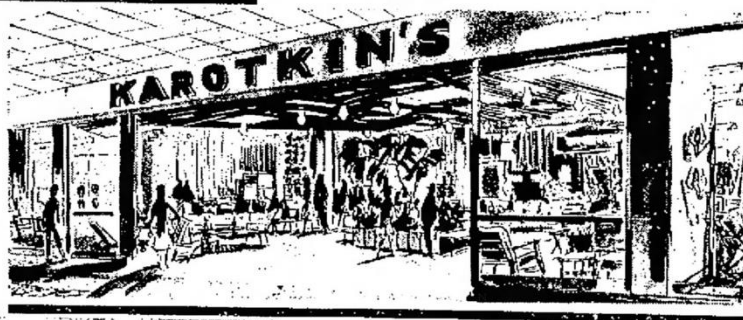
Karotkin's is unique in that it is an all-family firm. The business was founded in 1882 by Max Karotkin. In 1902 the late Jake and Joe Karotkin entered the business with their father and today the company is headed by the third generation — Milton, Bernard and Stanley Karotkin in charge of the San Antonio operation and Leonard Karotkin as head of the Austin Store.



KAROTKIN'S — North Star

Sid Silver
Manager

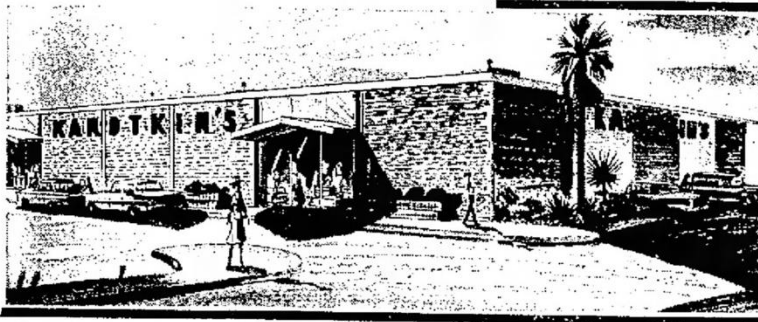
Karotkin's famous North Star store opened just five years ago, expanded for the first time 3 years later, and presently is building a second addition which will be a complete beautiful Early American center under the guidance of Sid Silver.



KAROTKIN'S — McCreless South

Vic Biggers
Manager

Vic Biggers, long familiar to Karotkin customers at the downtown store, heads the firm's southside store in McCreless Shopping City. Less than four years have passed since the opening of this, Karotkin's most recent store, and the store has already made an important place for itself in the lives of southside residents.



Karotkin's Services Key to Your Satisfaction!

Karotkin's feels that "selling" furniture is only half the performance of a fine home furnishings store. The other half is to make sure that from the decorating to the delivery departments, the customer knows she is being given the quickest, most courteous and most professional service available anywhere in the country!



Israel Adolph Lauterstein (1859-1929)

Prominent Business Man Dies Here Last Friday Morning



Citizens of our community and throughout South Texas were inexpressibly shocked last Friday to learn of the death of Mr. I Lauterstein, one of our city's prominent business men and one of the leading citizens of South Texas. His death occurred at the family home ...following an illness of only two or three days, although he had been in failing health for the past few years. He was taken dangerously ill Tuesday, his heart being affected, and although every attention possible was given him by family physician, nurse, family and friends, it was without avail. The end came quickly and peacefully, and this pioneer merchant and business man passed into the Great Beyond. There to await the coming of his loved ones left here on earth.

It was the wish of Mr. Lauterstein (often expressed in life) and of his family that he be buried in a Jewish cemetery at San Antonio, and this wish was complied with. Arrangements were made and the funeral party left here on the 1:15 train Friday afternoon for San Antonio.Arriving in San Antonio the remains were taken in charge by Masons of that city and after services by a Jewish rabbi, the Masons again took charge and laid the body to rest with fitting ceremonies. Fully thirty or more friends of the family accompanied the remains to San Antonio. The bereft ones returned home Saturday evening.

Mr. Lauterstein was 70 years of age. Although well along in years, he was a man of remarkable vigor and energy up to a few years ago, when it became necessary for him to undergo a serious operation. After that time it was noted that his health and strength were failing, although he kept up and about almost to the very last. The seriousness of the illness that attacked him Tuesday of last week was realized from the first. However, family and friends hoped that he would be able to live through it. But it was not to be.

Mr. Lauterstein was born in Tilset, Germany. He came to this country at an early age, and being a man of naturally friendly disposition he soon became acquainted with hundreds of people extending from extreme West Texas to the Texas coastal section. He had the faculty of never forgetting a face or friend, and due to this fact it was nothing remarkable for him to recognize friends whom he had not seen for thirty or forty years. Locating in Weimar in 1886 he engaged in the mercantile business, and was singularly successful. A few years later he was united in marriage to Miss Bertha Gabert of Waco, who, with her sons, Mannie and

George, survive, as well as two brothers, one residing in New York, the other in San Antonio.

Mr. Lauterstein's business grew slowly but surely through the years that followed, and...in Weimar he erected one of the finest brick business houses and installed one of the finest dry goods stocks to be found between Houston and San Antonio. His business continued to grow, and following this he established another fine store in LaGrange. The weight of years beginning to make itself felt upon even this robust man, he decided to retire from active business, and placed his son[s]...in charge of the ...business.... Both institutions proved successful, and are regarded as the leading dry goods houses of South Texas.

Mr. Lauterstein was a man of large affairs, and besides his mercantile interests was a stockholder in many of the leading banks from Houston to San Antonio. He was a man who never forgot a friend, and he helped hundreds and perhaps thousands with financial assistance during his lifetime. He believed in charity, and practiced it. He was a contributor to practically every religious denomination throughout this section, as well as churches and institutions conducted by the Jewish faith in the big cities. He was ever solicitous of the welfare of his friends, and ever ready to help with financial assistance or in any other way that he could.... Truly in his passing we have lost one of our best and most treasured friends.

A peculiar coincidence about Mr. Lauterstein's death was that it occurred on the 38th anniversary of his wedding day.

To the bereaved widow and sons our heartfelt sympathy is extended. Theirs is indeed a heavy, irreparable loss, and in their misfortune and sorrow we commend them to that great God above who is able to comfort all.

Sidney Maurice Levyson (1899-1967)¹⁴

Social Reformer Sidney Maurice Levyson lived his life under the name of Stanley Stein. He was a blind Jewish leper, involuntarily incarcerated in the camp for victims of Hansens Disease (leprosy) in Carville, Louisiana. Levyson refused to retreat into the living death of the disease, instead founding and editing the crusading "Star 66" Newspaper that brought hope to tens of thousands of sufferers from Hansens disease. To people around the world he brought understanding, awareness of the near-non-communicability of leprosy and scientific methods of treatment. As a crusading editor he helped change how American laws would treat victims of disease. It was in Carville that the cure for Hansen's was discovered, only it was too late for Levyson. His disease had progressed too far. Dying in 1967, his epitaph read: "Instead of bemoaning the things that I have lost, I try to make the most of what I have left." In his essay on Compensation, Emerson says, "For everything you have missed, you have gained something else."

¹⁴ Biography by Jerry Klinger on <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/20482686/sidney-maurice-levyson>

Abraham "Abe" Levytansky (1865-1930)¹⁵

There would not seem to be very close connection between the diamond business and large ranching interests, but that an individual can be successful in both lines is being demonstrated by Abraham Levytansky, of San Antonio, who is now retired from the jewelry line and is now carrying on large and important operations as a stock raiser, under the most modern and enlightened methods. Mr. Levytansky was born near the Town of Suwalk, Russ-Poland, Russia, not far from Koenigsburg, in extreme East Prussia, in 1865, and is a son of R. and Golda (Gumbiner) Levytansky, both natives of Poland.

Abe was reared and received his education in his native community, and learned the jeweler's and goldsmith's trade in the Town of Suwalk, where he served an apprenticeship. In 1881, at the age of sixteen years, he emigrated to the United States, and in 1882 came to Texas, settling at Luling. There, with \$8 worth of jeweler's tools, he entered business on his own account, determined to make a name and a place for himself in the world, instead of going to work for others. Although a mere youth, the expertness of his work brought much business to him, to such an extent that in the latter part of 1883 he removed to Hallettsville, in Lavaca County, where he established a larger stock and store. It was then that he began to make his own goods for his jewelry stock, a custom that he continued to follow in his subsequent business career. He made continued progress in his business, and in 1883 induced one of his brothers, Leon to come to America and join him in his enterprise. The brother learned the trade under his teaching, and Abe then set him up in business at Yoakum, Texas, where he put up a store, and established the firm of A. Levytansky & Brother. They were pioneer merchants in the then new Town of Yoakum, which had secured its start from the building of the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railroad through that section of the state. It should be stated in this connection that Abe was the man who raised the bonus of \$15,000 to secure the construction of this road through Hallettsville, and he was the first merchant to put up a store at Yoakum. Soon after this, another brother, H. Levytansky, came over from Poland and was established in business at Flatonia, this store being later moved to Lockhart. When Abe himself left Hallettsville, he left his store there in charge of his youngest brother, G. J. Levytansky, and himself located in business at Victoria....

After nine years of successful business in the beautiful and wealthy little City of Victoria, Abe, feeling the need for a larger territory for his trade, removed, in 1906, to San Antonio. He purchased the store building at No. 108 West Commerce Street and put in a stock of \$170,000 worth of goods, making an investment, altogether, including his building, of over \$300,000. It should be stated in this connection that Mr. Levytansky has always, in the eleven towns and cities in Texas in which he has done business, owned his own store building and his own home.

In his last location, at San Antonio, he built up the largest and most profitable retail diamond and jewelry business in the Lone Star State. He remained in the same location, on Commerce Street, until the fall of 1914, when, deciding to take up farming and ranching on a

¹⁵ From Ancestry.com Public Member Story written by karenshiller on 9 Feb 2015.

large scale as a life work, he sold out his business. During the years he was in this business he had become widely known, and most favorably, in the jewelry and diamond trade....

We will here quote from an article which appeared in one of San Antonio's leading newspapers, December 1, 1914: "After a career of thirty-seven years in the jewelry business in Southwest Texas, several years of which he spent in San Antonio, A. Levytansky is now engaged in the occupation of a farmer and livestock man by way of proving, incidentally, the assertion that 'Texas is the garden of the Lord.' When Mr. Levytansky recently closed out his jewelry stock in this city he traded a part of it for a ranch of 3,300 acres, situated in La Salle and Dimmit counties. For several years the jeweler had listened to the call of the farm. He conceived some rather original ideas as to plans and methods, and now he is gradually working them out. Within a year Mr. Levytansky expects to have one of the most attractive and modernly improved ranches in all Texas. This he expects to bring about by means of large expenditures and the demonstration of well matured plans. He is already cultivating 1,400 acres, on which he will produce a variety of feeds. Some of these are the same as are grown generally in Southwest Texas. Others, entirely new to this section, are to be introduced, and for which the planter has high hopes. Two big silos have been erected on the farm and others are to be built as needed. Intensive methods are to be used, and practically all the feed raised on the ranch will be 'canned' in the Levytansky high efficiency plan. There are not enough pigs in Texas. Mr. Levytansky is going to increase the number in the interest of the general meat supply. He has already partly stocked his farm with hogs and is arranging to give them the best of everything, even to the erection of large sheds to furnish them with shade in the summer. There is a lake of fine water in the hog pasture. Dairy is another feature of the ranch. Mr. Levytansky is planting many shade and ornamental trees and laying out flower beds in the general plan of beautification. Living on the Levytansky ranch is going to be one long round of pleasure. In maturing his plans, the former jeweler is spending a lot of money. A graduate agriculturist has been employed to superintend the ranch. Next year, when his ranch has been put in tiptop shape and the former cactus thicket made to blossom like a rose, Mr. Levytansky proposes to go to New York City and bring a lot of men of wealth down to Southwest Texas to demonstrate to them what can be done in this incomparable region when science and capital are combined and given intelligent direction. As a result of the proposed tour of New Yorkers he believes several considerable investments will be made in Southwest Texas lands...."

....In addition to the place described above, Mr. Levytansky has another small farm on the Nueces River, in La Salle County, eight miles from Cotula, which is irrigated from his own irrigation plant. Here he has silos, ensilage cutters, etc."

Samuel Mayer (1837-1920)

Samuel was born in Germany on January 20, 1837. He immigrated to the United States in 1852. He was a merchant who sold barber supplies, according to the 1910 US Census.



Samuel was an artillery officer of the Confederate Army. In San Antonio, he was one of the founding members of the Alamo Brandeis B'nai B'rith Lodge. He was also the founding president of Temple Beth-El and served two terms.

He died at age 82 on January 8th 1920 in Gainesville, Texas. He is buried at the Temple Beth-El Cemetery on Palmetto Street.

Daniel Oppenheimer (1836-1915)

Daniel Oppenheimer, merchant and banker, was born on November 22, 1836, in Burgkunstadt, Bavaria, the first of eight children of Joseph and Yetta Oppenheimer. He immigrated to the United States in 1854, arriving in New York, then sailing to Galveston, and moving from there to Palestine, Texas, where an uncle, Leopold Veith, lived. Daniel traveled to Texas with another uncle, Julius Oppenheimer. Daniel worked for his uncle Veith as a peddler for two years, then moved on to Rusk, where he set up his own peddling business. In 1858 he sent for his



brother Anton Oppenheimer, and they formed a partnership called D and A Oppenheimer. From 1858 to 1861 they operated as small merchants in Rusk and the surrounding area. In 1861 they closed their store, left their merchandise with their uncle, and joined the Confederate Army. Daniel joined the Tenth Texas Cavalry at Rusk and was wounded at the battle of Nashville. After his discharge as a captain in Richmond, Virginia, Daniel rejoined his brother in Rusk to sell merchandise. Later the brothers moved to San Antonio, where they reopened their firm. As their business grew, they began trading goods to ranchers for cattle; they also began to buy land. At one time they ran 15,000 head on ranches; one ranch comprised 110,000 acres in McMullen and Atascosa counties. They owned smaller ranches closer to San Antonio that covered 5,000 to 8,000 acres. The Hord Ranch near San Antonio grazed sheep and goats; the Oppenheims were among the pioneers in the raising of goats and the production of mohair in Texas. After the Civil War Daniel and Anton operated a bank. The Oppenheims financed many of the cattle drives up the Chisholm Trail. Anton died in 1906, and in 1908 Daniel sold their largest ranch. On August 29, 1869, Daniel had married Louisa Goldstein, daughter of Henry and Fredericka (Pfeiffer) Goldstein, pioneer residents of New York City; he had met her while on a buying trip to New York. Daniel and his wife had seven children. Daniel Oppenheimer was a Mason, a member of the Harmony Club, and one of the leaders of Congregation Beth-El. He died at his home on Jefferson Street in San Antonio on December 7, 1915.¹⁶

According to the *San Antonio Express* in 1880, their store, D. & A. Oppenheimer “is one of our best known dry goods houses. They transact an enormous business and are known in mostly every household in Western Texas.” In the late 19th century, Texas law banned state banks, and so many of the Oppenheims’ customers asked to keep their money in the store’s safe. Ranchers also used such merchants to front them credit for their endeavors. This banking service to their store customers soon grew into a side business. Around the turn of the century, the brothers closed their store to focus on their banking business. D. & A. Oppenheimer remained a private bank; it did not belong to the Federal Reserve and did not have FDIC protection. Such private banks were later banned in Texas, but the D & A Oppenheimer bank was allowed to continue since it predated the law. The bank remained a family business, with Dan’s son Jesse later running it. Dan’s grandson Herbert Oppenheimer, its last president, decided to liquidate the bank in 1988 when there was no longer anyone in the family who wanted to run the business.¹⁷

¹⁶ <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fop01>

¹⁷ <http://www.isjl.org/texas-san-antonio-encyclopedia.html>

Frederic Goldstein Oppenheimer (1881-1963)

Frederic Goldstein Oppenheimer, businessman, physician, and art collector, was born in San Antonio, Texas, on May 26, 1881, one of seven children of Louisa (Goldstein) and Daniel Oppenheimer. He attended the University of Texas and then Columbia University, where he graduated in 1902. He graduated with a medical education from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University in 1906. Afterwards he practiced medicine in New York City and worked at Mount Sinai Hospital before returning to San Antonio in 1921. He



Mrs. Alexander Joske with her grandsons, Frederick Oppenheimer Jr. and Alexander Joske Oppenheimer, and her son-in-law, Dr. Frederick Oppenheimer. She was dressed in mourning clothes following the death of her husband. Taken at dedication of Joske Boy Scout Center, 1926.

married Lucille Joske, and they had two children.

Shortly before his father-in-law, Alexander Joske, died in 1925, Dr.

Oppenheimer left his medical practice to manage Joske's Department Store, which he sold in 1929 to Hahn Department Stores.

Frederic and Lucille Oppenheimer became international art collectors. For many years they had a private seven-room museum of art in an addition to their home.

They had built the house

in 1921, and they added the wing around 1930 or 1931. They donated numerous paintings of the Hudson River School to the San Antonio Art League and the Witte Museum and donated parts of their collection to the Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute. Their paintings are housed in a wing of the McNay Museum bearing their name. The Oppenheimer Collection includes Flemish, Impressionist, Medieval, and Renaissance paintings, as well as sculptures and room panelings. Their son Alexander and his family donated funds for a Boy Scout home and home for wayward girls. Frederic Oppenheimer died in San Antonio on October 31, 1963 and was buried in Temple Beth-El Cemetery.

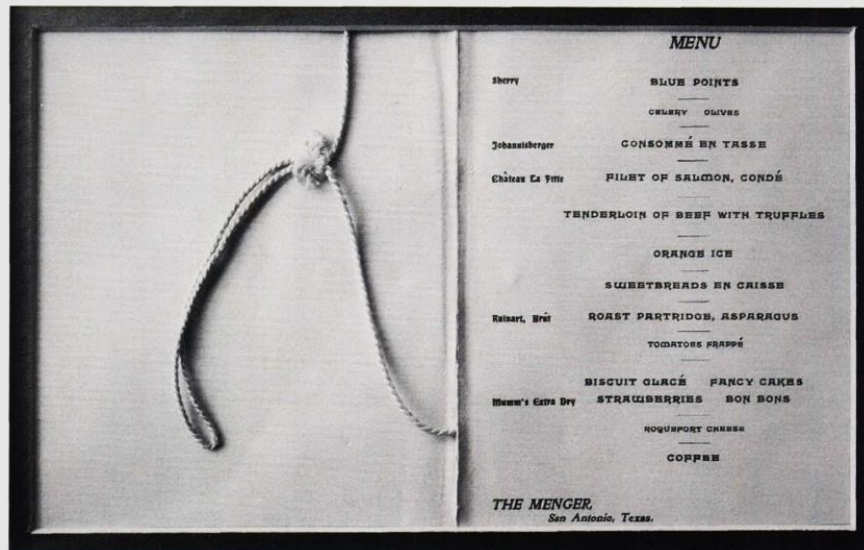
Jesse D. Oppenheimer (1870-1964)

The 1898 wedding of Lillie Halff and Jesse Oppenheimer in San Antonio illustrates the continuity of Jewish heritage amid adaptation to a new world. The March 25, 1898, *San Antonio Daily Express*, while acknowledging each family's prominence in Jewish circles, also hailed the Halffs and Oppenheimers as "social leaders." The Temple Beth-El ceremony, at which Rabbi Samuel Marks officiated, was followed by a banquet adjacent to the Alamo at the Menger Hotel, the city's preeminent lodging establishment. The menu for the evening included non-kosher items such as tenderloin, blue point oysters, and game partridge.

Marriage alliance. The wedding of Jesse D. Oppenheimer and Lillie Halff, March 24, 1898, united two of San Antonio's leading business, ranching, and civic-minded families. Courtesy of the Historic Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX.



Wedding feast. Guests were wined and dined at a five-course dinner of Gulf oysters, tenderloin with truffles, game, assorted desserts, and Roquefort cheese. The menu is indicative of the families' sophisticated tastes, exposure to travel, and Classical Reform Jewish diet. Courtesy Historic Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX.



Morris Stern (1864-1944)



Morris Stern served as the Board Chairman for the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce in 1921. He was the Zone Chairman for Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and State Chairman for Texas for the UAHC from November 1st, 1919 to October 31st, 1920.

"Stern was chairman of the board of D. Ansley Company, Inc., a savings and loan. He had been president of the temple in the 1920s and had served as chairman of the building committee when the congregation organized to erect its third house of worship.... Stem was also among the most generous donors to the construction

fund.

**Rites Set for
Morris Stern,
Civic Leader**

Funeral services for Morris Stern, 80, philanthropist and civic leader, were to be held at 2 p. m. Monday in Temple Beth El, who died at the St. Anthony hotel Saturday night.

Morris Stern was born in Danzig, came to the United States at the age of 15. He settled first in Galveston, later came to San Antonio in 1917, where he was first connected with the wholesale grocery firm of Ullman, Stern & Krause. Later he was in the investment business. At the time of his death he was president of the General Hotel Supply company.

FOUNDER OF CAMP

Until his eyesight failed, he was a prominent civic leader, and 30 years ago he conceived the idea of the development of a modern San Antonio. Toward this end, he worked with the group that promoted the idea through the chamber of commerce.

He helped organize the Community Chest here, was food administrator for Texas during World War I, was a past president of Temple Beth El. He founded Camp Laf-a-Lot for under-privileged children. He was a member of the Blue lodge, Scottish Rite Masons and of the Shrine.

AT BETH EL

He leaves his widow, Mrs. Ella Stern; one son, Capt. Morris Stern Jr. of Houston, and one daughter, Mrs. Dan Dreeben.

Rabbi William Sajowitz will conduct funeral services, and burial will be in Temple Beth El cemetery.

Active pallbearers will be Nat Goldsmith, Joe Rubin, A. J. Levinson, Walter Withers, Jack Pitluk and Ed I. Lee.

Stern had immigrated to the United States from Germany. Stem counted non-Jewish Germans among his friends and had frequented the Germania club, a social group for German expatriates, when he lived in Galveston. Some of those who knew Stern ... described him variously as conservative, smart, authoritarian, brusque, and "Germanic" in a sense that was not meant to be flattering. Stem is

perhaps best remembered, however, for his role in orchestrating the building of the new synagogue and his foresight in urging that it be built large enough to accommodate a growing congregation. Less known is his flirtation in 1936 with a now defunct far-right organization called the America Forward Movement for Religion and Americanism."¹⁸

¹⁸ "Personality, politics and the price of justice: Ephraim Frisch, San Antonio's 'radical' rabbi." [The Free Library](#). 1997 American Jewish Historical Society

Nathaniel “Nat” Moses Washer (1861-1935)

Nathaniel Moses Washer was born April 12, 1861, in Somerville, Tennessee, to Benjamin and Eva (Greenwald) Washer. In 1875, after his father's death, he went to work at a Memphis wholesale clothing establishment instead of continuing school. He worked there for the next three years, rising from a lowly door sentinel to become a stock manager by the time he was seventeen. His understanding of the mercantile business developed rapidly, and in 1878 his employer sent him to New York City. Sometime in 1879 Washer moved to St. Louis, Missouri, and before long he became a traveling salesman. In 1882 Nat returned to St. Louis and then moved to Fort Worth, Texas, where he and his older brother, Jacob, established Washer Brothers Clothiers. The store specialized in ready-to-wear clothing for men and boys. Advertised as "The Western Outpost of Texas," it also sold a variety of goods to cowboys and ranchers.



In September 1899 Washer and his family moved to San Antonio to open a branch of the Washer Brothers store. Like the Fort Worth store, Nat Washer's San Antonio business first specialized in ready-to-wear clothing for men and boys. By 1905 it had expanded to become an upscale three-story store with an atmosphere of elegance and exclusiveness. The first floor was devoted to men's clothing and furnishings, and many lines of luxury items for women were added.

In 1900 Nat became the most worshipful master of the statewide Masonic Grand Lodge of Texas. In 1903 he helped to found the city's Associated Charities and subsequently served a term as its president. In 1905 he was selected to give a welcoming speech to President Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders during their reunion in San Antonio. In 1906 he was elected president of the San Antonio Businessman's Club.

Over the next thirty years Nat Washer played prominent roles in the civic and cultural development of San Antonio. As president of the Businessmen's Club and in other capacities he pushed to attract new capital to the city and to promote the creation of new businesses. During the 1910s and 1920s he was a member of the San Antonio school board and chairman of the city's public Carnegie Library. He served as president of the San Antonio Music Association and president of the Witte Museum and helped to form the city's Symphony Orchestra Society and the San Antonio Artist Series. He also chaired a committee that led to the building of San Antonio's first Municipal Auditorium. A devoted Reform Jew, Washer served as the president of the board of trustees of San Antonio's Temple Beth El from

1902 to 1907 and remained active in the city's Jewish community for many years. From about 1900 to the early 1930s, Washer played the role of San Antonio's official and unofficial ambassador. He served on welcoming committees for presidents Taft and Wilson and introduced a wide variety of actors, foreign dignitaries, artists, military officers, and well-known celebrities. Washer was a popular public speaker; his remarks at conventions, public assemblies, and formal dinners were often reprinted or quoted in the local press.

Washer also became well-known in San Antonio and around the state for his philanthropic activities. Though Washer never graduated from high school, he read extensively and wrote essays and poems that were published in the San Antonio Light, the Jewish Record, the Dallas Morning News, and Texas Grand Lodge Magazine.

In the 1910s he spoke out for women's suffrage and in 1929 he became the first president of the Texas State Board of Education, a position he continued to hold until his death in 1935. On the day of his funeral every child in the San Antonio public school system observed a moment of silence in his honor.

Louis Zork (1812-1885)

According to local historian Frances Kallison, the first Jew to settle in San Antonio was Prussian immigrant Louis Zork, who was living in the city with his wife Adele by 1847. Although he wasn't on the 1850 Census Roll for Bexar County, he was listed as present at a meeting of Master Masons residing in Bexar County in November 1847. On December 1, 1847, Zork was elected the Senior Warden of the Alamo Lodge #44. According to Frances Kallison, "Zork must have been a resident of San Antonio and Bexar County for some time previous to this occasion in order to have earned the esteem and respect of his fellow Masons."



Zork opened a store by 1851, later adding a wholesale operation. Zork's business was quite successful as by 1860 he had over \$50,000 in personal wealth. By 1867, Zork was a director of the San Antonio National Bank. Taking advantage of life in a small town with a burgeoning immigrant population, Zork was able to move quickly into civic and political leadership. He served as a city alderman from 1856 to 1857, and was elected treasurer of Bexar County, a position he held from 1856 to 1865.

Zork was one of a handful of German Jews who lived in San Antonio in the 1850s. According to Kallison, about 10 or 11 Jewish families lived in the city by the end of the decade. While he was listed as a contributor to the German-English school, he also was a very active leader in Jewish charities – helping Jews all over. In 1856, Zork was one of the founders of the Hebrew Benevolent Society whose mission was "to provide a decent burial for indigents, to care for the sick in poor circumstances, and to care for needy people without relatives." (Kallison)

In 1874, he was one of the founders of Temple Beth-El.