

56-1035

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Other names/site number: 32RY191

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 88<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, 1/4 mile north of 67<sup>th</sup> St NE

City or town: Garske

State: ND

County: Ramsey

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

<u>[Signature]</u> , DIRECTOR	<u>4.17.2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ND, NDSHPD</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*[Handwritten Signature]* *6/5/17*  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary: cemetery

graves/burials

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary: cemetery

graves/burials

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: marble, granite, tin

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is located in the E ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 27 in Sullivan Township, Ramsey County, North Dakota, about seven miles southeast of Starkweather or six miles northeast of Garske and about 25 miles northeast of Devils Lake, North Dakota. A strip of treeless prairie rises to a small hill. The cemetery is on the hill, is fenced, and measures 140' x 145'. The Jewish community owns five acres that include the cemetery, the access trail, and native prairie area surrounded by cultivated fields. It is the only permanent physical reminder of the Ramsey County Jewish farming community, the second settled agricultural Jewish settlement in North Dakota, and is the oldest surviving Jewish cemetery in the state.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William C. Sherman, "Finding Aid to William Sherman's Jewish Settlement in North Dakota," Institute for Regional Studies and University Archives North Dakota State University Libraries, 2009, Pg 2.



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## Narrative Description

### The Cemetery Location and Land

Sons of Jacob Cemetery in 2004  
looking west

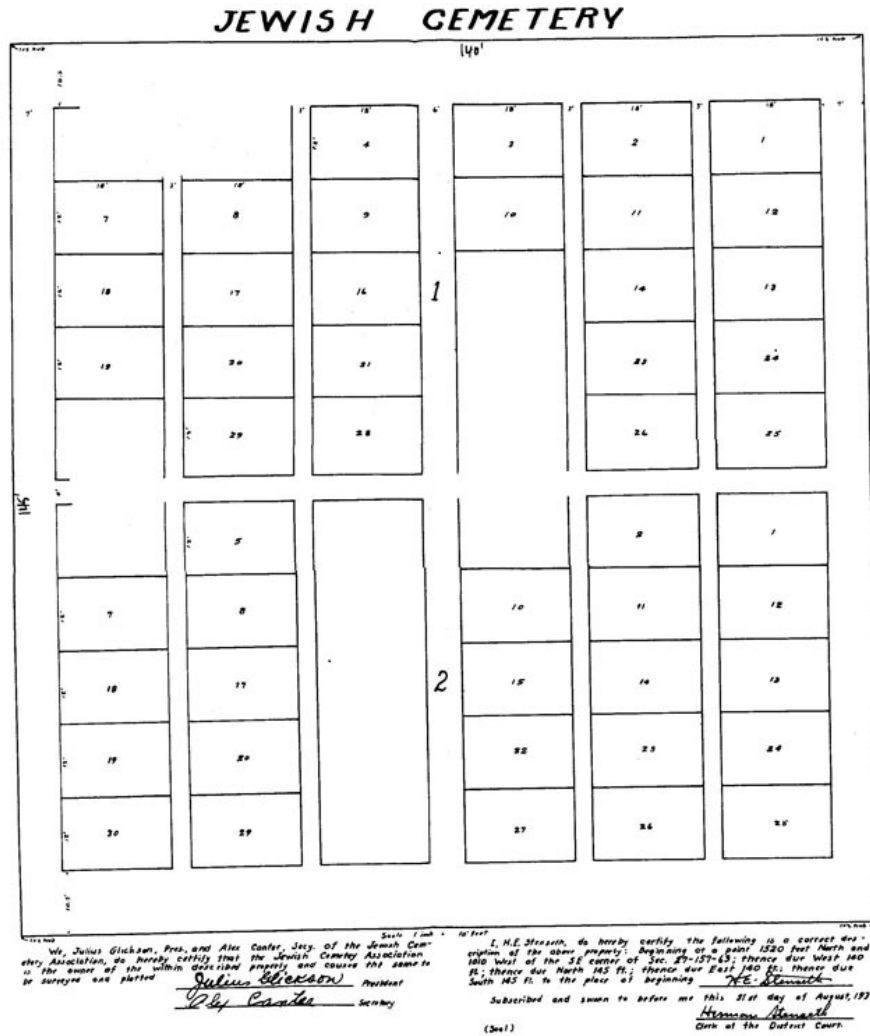


View of Sons of Jacob Cemetery in 2004 from trail leading to cemetery off 88<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE (Slide from "A Journey Through Time" by Hal Ettinger)

Hal Ettinger, ancestor, explained this survey map was obtained from the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati Campus. As for how much of the 140' x 145' cemetery plot is in use; the directional North arrow (right margin) is about where the current sign and gate into the cemetery are located, concluding the northern half has most gravesites (see figure on page 6). There is doubt whether the Jewish Cemetery Association (in 1933) considered placement of existing burial locations when they mapped out all the 12' x 18' plots seen on this survey map.

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1933 Sons of Jacob Cemetery survey map

We, Julius Glickson, Pres., and Alex Canter, Secy., of the Jewish Cemetery Association, do hereby certify that the Jewish Cemetery Association is the owner of the within described property and course the same to be surveyed and platted. Signed by Julius Glickson, President and Alex Canter, Secretary.

I, H.E. Stenseth, do hereby certify the following is a correct description of the above property; beginning of a point 1520 feet North and 1010 feet West of the SE corner of Section 27-157-63; thence due West 140 feet; thence due North 145 feet; thence due East 140 feet, thence due South 145 feet to the place of beginning. Signed by H.E. Stenseth. Subscribed and sworn to before me this 31<sup>st</sup> day of August, 1933, signed Herman Stenseth, Clerk of the District Court.

General Overview

The Jewish community referred to as the Garske Colony began forming in the 1880s along with the Jewish burying ground named the Sons of Jacob Cemetery with burials from about 1888 until 1935. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery name derived from the Sons of Jacob St. Paul Synagogue

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whose members sent financial assistance to the Garske Colony.<sup>2</sup> The Sons of Jacob received an organizational charter from the North Dakota Secretary of State in October 1929. It is unknown why the group did not get a charter until this time. The twenty individuals who made up the initial membership had the task of determining whether they would build a synagogue. Since Jewish worship does not require a special building, they never did. The congregation conducted religious activities for the Jewish families of Devils Lake and those who lived in nearby areas in several homes, the township school, and later at the Devils Lake courthouse.

The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is the oldest cemetery of the three-remaining visible Jewish homestead cemeteries in North Dakota, the other two being the Ashley Jewish Homesteaders Cemetery and the Regan/Wing Jewish Cemetery.<sup>3</sup> The Sons of Jacob Cemetery was the major site for burial of the Jewish homesteading farmers and families close to the Devils Lake community, and between Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada and Grand Forks, North Dakota. Today there are seventeen recognizable gravesites of which thirteen gravestones are identified, eleven marked with names and most accompanied by original markers from the period 1888-1935.<sup>4</sup> All the people buried in the cemetery were Eastern European Jewish homesteaders or members of their families. The exact number of burials at the Sons of Jacob is unknown and there is anecdotal evidence from family historians and other third party sources of additional unmarked gravesites in the cemetery. No formal investigation of the cemetery or graves has ever been done. "Many believe there are more graves than that," said Leighton Siegel of St. Paul, gesturing at the many small, unmarked mounds dotting the ground. But how many more, "I don't think anyone knows."<sup>5</sup>



(Left) Road sign leading to the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, note Sons of Jacob sign on power pole (camera facing east)  
(Right) Sons of Jacob road sign indicating the turn off 88<sup>th</sup> Ave onto the trail leading to the cemetery (camera facing north)

<sup>2</sup> Janell Cole, "Family Honor," *The Fargo Forum*, September 18, 2006. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org) accessed June 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Sherman, "Finding Aid to William Sherman's Jewish Settlement in North Dakota," pg. 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Sons of Jacob Cemetery, (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>5</sup> Cole.

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(Left) Trail leading to the Sons of Jacob Cemetery off 88<sup>th</sup> AVE NE (camera facing west)

(Right) Entrance gate into the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, informational sign, guest mailbox and sign (camera facing west)

### Cemetery Founding Family

The Herman Kaufman family arrived in the area in 1884 and the location of the cemetery was determined by them when their son died likely in 1888 or 1889. At the time of the boy's death, the prairie was vastly unsettled and probably no rabbis were available. The story reads, "One of the little boys died in that sod house by the water hole; the baby, nineteen months old. He developed convulsions. His father, Herman Kaufman, rode like mad across the prairie, was sixteen hours in finding the doctor, and twelve hours more in getting him to the claim. At that, the doctor was drunk. "But he was just as good drunk as sober," said one of the Kaufmans cryptically. When he arrived, the baby was dead. After the parents and uncle (Morris Kohn) prepared for the boy's burial, they laid him away at the summit of their hill.<sup>6</sup> Their little private graveyard became the Jewish burying ground for this region of North Dakota.

The family chose to follow the more traditional Jewish practices of dressing the body in a *tachrichim*, the traditional garment in which the dead are wrapped before burial in white, the preferred color. The body was then placed in a wooden casket built of pine.<sup>7</sup> It is not known if they were following their custom of not marking infant's graves, but there is no evidence of a grave marker for this child, whose possible name was Joseph Kaufman. His birth date is estimated between 1884 and 1890 with death date and location listed 'unknown' as it was not officially recorded.<sup>8</sup> The Kaufman family lived here for six years during which time three more children were born.

<sup>6</sup> Will Irwin, *The House That Shadows Built*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc. 1928. Pg. 65.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "Joseph Kaufman," *Geni*. [www.geni.com/people/Joseph-Kaufman/6000000001273189464](http://www.geni.com/people/Joseph-Kaufman/6000000001273189464) accessed 2016.



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## Tombstones and Gravesites

A Jewish tombstone (*matsevah*) at the gravesite is meant to honor the deceased and ensure that each resting place can be located quickly and with certainty. The headstones provide information in the understanding of the Jewish homesteaders' life of trying to hold fast to their religious tradition. Instead of granite and marble, half of the grave markers of the poor frontier community are unique in that they are of available indigenous materials made from fieldstones or tin with the names carved by hand. The material used gives the graves the appearance of an almost natural feature of the landscape having been made from native elements of rocks and wood. No remaining markers are wood. The relatively small number of remaining gravestones also suggests that few Jewish homesteaders could afford to purchase carved gravestones or to transport them to the burial site. An advertisement for Granite and Marble Monuments from H.J. Brooks Granite and Marble Company in the Inter-Ocean Devils Lake, ND Dec. 1, 1905 newspaper illustrates that they were available. To travel the 25 miles to Devils Lake would have been an all-day trip with horse and buggy (if they had one, otherwise it might have been a stoneboat).

Three of the gravesites are outlined by a ring of moss-covered fieldstone rocks, with only one identified with what appears as "S ETTING DIED THE 28," in tin punched lettering wired to a boulder. The burial of Simon Ettinger who died August 14, 1891 is the oldest identified burial in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. The metal marker once had an old wood plank primitively carved with "SM ETTINGER" above it, fashioned in the form of a headstone. The wood plank has been removed from the cemetery to prevent it from further deterioration and was submitted to the Lake Region Heritage Center Museum for its historical relevance and preservation.



Simon Ettinger's gravesite (camera facing east)



Close up of Simon Ettinger's headstone

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Simon Ettinger's wood plank headstone (located at LRHC Museum)

The second of this type of gravesite, outlined by a ring of moss covered fieldstone rocks, consists of a headstone shaped like a metal box with an inscription on its tin panel. After having been blown one and a half miles away in a storm, it was found against the inside of a fence and returned to the Sons of Jacob.<sup>9</sup> The marker panels were put back together, but it was later noticed the name panel was backward. The name panel has been corrected but since then, the two Hebrew letters (Pey and Nun) meaning "Here lies," which traditionally appear at the top of Jewish monuments, were identified at the bottom of the Hebrew-inscribed panel. At this time, the Hebrew panel remains upside down.



(Left) Front side of Joseph Adelman's metal box headstone before that panel was corrected (Right) Back side of Joseph Adelman's metal box headstone with epitaph upside down, note Pey and Nun at bottom of the metal sheet.

Of the other two similar gravesites, one is a mound of earth with rocks, located beside Ettinger's gravesite, without a marker and is unidentified. The fourth gravesite is a mound surrounded by a ring of rocks with a metal headstone, but unidentified.

<sup>9</sup> Diane Siegel, "Reflections on the Dedication," [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)



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Known gravesites by mound and ring of rocks, both unidentified

Four headstones are native fieldstones with three having a visible inscription carved out, a time-consuming process. The inscriptions of the names and dates are barely legible having been worn away by time and the elements. Many of the Sons of Jacob tombstone epitaphs are likely in Yiddish<sup>10</sup> (the historical language of Ashkenazic Jews; a dialect of High German that includes some Hebrew elements) and contain the traditional wording found on Jewish gravesites throughout the world for many centuries.

At the top of most Jewish tombstones is the abbreviation נ"פ, which stands for *po nikbar* or *po nitman*, meaning "here lies".<sup>11</sup> At the end of many Hebrew tombstone inscriptions you will find the abbreviation ה' ב' צ' נ' ה', 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". Some follow the Jewish tradition with life milestone events and religious holy days rather than the Gregorian calendar.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Through Yiddish, the historical language of Ashkenazic Jews; a dialect of High German that includes some Hebrew elements, the culture of the shtetl, immigrant Jewish life in America, old-world folklore— and more can be discovered.

<sup>11</sup> "Jewish Gen." *Reading Hebrew Tombstones*. <http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/tombstones.html> accessed April 25, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

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Charlotte Greenberg's original Folk Art carved native fieldstone. Israel Greenberg's original native fieldstone.



Two additional unidentified Folk Art headstones of carved native fieldstone

Traditional in its basics, the chiseled carvings became tied to the life of its people who were subjected to religious oppression, but brought up in the spirit of tolerance and hope for their religion. The gravestone was a binding link between the living and the dead, between the real world and the hereafter. Few stone carved tombstones still exist in East European cemeteries due to the destruction of these graveyards during Nazi occupation, economic reasons, and an



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intolerance of religious feelings.<sup>13</sup> Carved Jewish tombstones can be traced back to the third decade of the first century from Egypt, and the Jewish catacombs of Italy and Spain.<sup>14</sup>

Stonecutting was a hereditary craft, passed from one generation to another. This sometimes gave each cemetery its own distinct style. Three of the carved tombstones in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery appear to be of the same creative style, shape and design suggesting the same individual as the stonecutter. The weathering of the fourth one has eliminated all possible carving of text and image, but may have had the same individual as the stonecutter (Israel Greenberg's original stone).

The carved reliefs on tombstones were not considered noteworthy due to the bias against simple folk art until the early twentieth century when Jewish carved stone art was in decline. The gravestones were replaced by monuments of other forms including obelisk, marble, and granite monuments causing the traditional language to be lost and traditional art forgotten. Solomon Calof's tombstone in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery is an obelisk and ten of the other tombstones are marble or granite monuments. In 2012, a native field rock was donated by an area farmer and engraved with the Star of David (known in Hebrew as the Shield of David or Magen David) a generally recognized symbol of modern Jewish identity, and the word 'Unknown.' It was placed in the cemetery to remember those without markers.<sup>15</sup>



Native field stone placed in the cemetery in 2012 to remember those without markers, note small remembrance stones placed around marker

<sup>13</sup> David Goberman, *Carved Memories Heritage in Stone from the Russian Jewish Pale*. Rizzoli, New York 2000. Pg. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Pg. 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> Events, Updates & Additions [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

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Some epitaphs appear to have more detailed text, describing the integrity of the deceased. The architectonics of the forty-nine letters followed the classic Hebrew tradition of thin vertical elements connected by heavy horizontal ones with the elongated final character in ancient Hebrew manuscripts.<sup>16</sup> The deterioration from weathering of the stones at the Sons of Jacob makes this characteristic difficult to decipher, but it can be seen on Mendel Mill's, Solomon Kalov's, and the Greenberg children's newer tombstones.

Examples of images on the tombstones derived from the carver's imagination and could range from human forms such as hands; be tied to religious symbolism such as the menorah; animals such as a lion; or could relate to the profession of the deceased. The possible artwork image on a 1902 native fieldstone at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery may be the "Tree of Life."



Possible Folk Art carving on native fieldstone of 'Tree of Life.' Note Hebrew letters, 'Peh Nun.'

<sup>16</sup> Gberman, Pg. 24.



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The artwork symbolism on a 1902 granite tombstone of an unknown person is a palm and flowers.

For the question, what do the various images on these very old tombstones mean (if anything) at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery? A tree could be a Tree of Life or the images could be just decorations without particular significance or concrete meaning, per Rabbi Michael Adam Latz, Shir Tikvah Congregation, Minneapolis, MN. A professional stone carver may not have been present or affordable resulting in stones decorated with designs done without skill, but still valued by the family as a tribute to the memory of the deceased.

Artistry and thoughtfulness were the major characteristics of the stones of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The basic form of the art of carved tombstones progressed from simple to more complex forms. The face of the stone typically included a Hebrew epitaph on its front side. Very brief, it usually consisted of the deceased's name and the name of the father (without a family name); one or two descriptive terms; date of death with day, month, and year in the Jewish calendar; and the inevitable five-letter of the farewell blessing, "May his/her soul be bound in the bond of eternal life," (seen on Mandel Mill's tombstone).

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The five-letter of the farewell blessing, "May his/her soul be bound in the bond of eternal life," located on line above 'Mandel Mill'

Some epitaphs have more detailed text describing the virtues of the deceased, sometimes with quotations related to a Biblical person of the same name. Most tombstones with Hebrew epitaphs at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery have not been transcribed or the translations have not been located,<sup>17</sup> thus graves not identified. Some stones also had other symbols such as a palm on a 1902 granite tombstone of an unknown person.

Solomon Kalov died March 1, 1909 and was buried at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. He was Rachel Bella Calof's father-in-law.<sup>18</sup> The translation of the Yiddish inscription of Solomon Kalov's fieldstone marker was completed in 2013 by great-great-grandson Daniel Yelenik, rabbi and lawyer.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> It is thought at the rededication of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery that a friend of Hal Ettinger's was able to translate the headstones, but no one remembers her name or knows what she did with the information.

<sup>18</sup> "Rachel's Journey to America," Rachel Calof Family Reunion and a Play Starring Kate Fuglei in Devils Lake, North Dakota, June 20 & 21, 2014. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

<sup>19</sup> "Tracing Solomon Kalov's Hebrew Epitaph" June 22, 2014, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)



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Solomon Kalov's Yiddish inscription, note "here lies" on second line

Born in the  
Month of tevet  
Here Lies  
The Precious man  
Our teacher Shalom  
The son of Shaul  
Who died in the year 5669  
on the  
8th Day of the  
Month of Ader

Solomon's headstone includes the most frequently used phrase "here lies." The epitaph consists of two descriptive terms "precious" and "Our teacher Shalom"; the deceased's name of the father (without a family name); date of death with year, day and month in the Jewish calendar. The artwork symbolism on Solomon Calof's tombstone is flowers.

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Most 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.<sup>20</sup> If any Hebrew characters at all are written on a tombstone, they are most likely to be the person's Hebrew name.<sup>21</sup> A Hebrew name always includes a *patronymic*, the person's father's given name. This can be seen and read in Solomon Kalov's tombstone with the patronymic name, "Shaul." (The Jewish meaning of *Shaul* is from the Hebrew form of the Biblical name Saul. Solomon was born in the civil equivalent month of December-January, died in the year 1909 in the civil equivalent month February-March.)

Not unlike other pioneer-era graveyards, the cemetery testifies to the hardships of homesteading with the death of not only one, but sometimes more children in the family. In 1884 Jewish immigrants Phillip and Mollie Greenberg moved to Ramsey County, North Dakota with three of their children to homestead. Eight more children were born, but two died and were buried in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, Israel (1892-1903) and Charlotte (1902-1906) Greenberg. Mrs. Irwin (Nettie) Epstein was responsible for two newer headstones (late 1990s) that were placed in front of the original fieldstone markers of the graves of these relatives. Nettie was a daughter of Phillip Greenberg, a sister to these children buried here.



Greenberg children's original Folk Art native fieldstones in front of their newer granite headstone

<sup>20</sup> "Jewish Gen."

<sup>21</sup> "Histories and Stories About and by Immigrants," [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).



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Greenberg children's newer headstones placed behind the original fieldstone markers



Photo of the back of Charlotte and Israel Greenberg's four headstones (camera facing east)

Of the gravesites identified at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, at least six include children in which two families lost two children each. Traditionally smaller grave markers indicated the resting-place of children as can be seen in the two Canter children's tombstones and the original smaller headstone of eleven-year old Israel Greenberg, Benny Parks, and in a tombstone for a four-year-old with Hebrew inscription.



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Headstones of brother and sister, Joseph and Anna Canter



Headstone of unidentified 4-year-old.



Headstone of two-week-old Benny Parks

The Sons of Jacob graves do not appear to be in the neat rows which mirror the social and cultural norms of today's cemeteries. The burials seem more haphazard, more medieval in their irregularity; families did not own plots. The location of the graves could also reflect status with the north corner of the cemetery considered less desirable. It was reserved for stillborns, and is often the last part of the burying ground to be used, or you may find the north side set aside for slaves, servants, suicides, "unknowns," etc.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Jessie Lie Farber, "Symbolism on Gravestones," *The Association for Gravestone Studies*.  
<http://www.gravestonestudies.org/> accessed June 2016.



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M. Slumezon's 1900 headstone located in the NW corner of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery

There is a marked gravesite of M. Slumezon located in the northwest corner of the cemetery, separate from the other graves, but today the reason is unknown. It could have been for an infant, a custom of primarily Orthodox Jews influenced by the custom of not saying *Kaddish* (the Mourner's Prayer) for infants.<sup>23</sup> Jewish law is clear on the status of an infant who dies before reaching the age of thirty days. For a child who dies before that time, no burial and no mourning rites are required. This ruling was made at a time when miscarriage, early death, and stillborn children were commonplace and the community would have been in a constant state of mourning. There appears to be a children's section at the Sons of Jacob with gravesites of four of the children buried in the same area. They are the graves of Israel Greenberg, Charlotte Greenberg, Anna Cantor, and an unknown child who was buried at age four.



Four headstones representing the two Greenberg children, Israel Greenberg's headstone on the front left side, beside Charlotte Greenberg's on the front right (their newer 1990s headstones are behind their original headstones); 1902 headstone of an unidentified child behind them; Anna Canter's headstone on right side of photo

Most of the names on the original Jewish cemetery's stones have worn off and it is uncertain if any more will be identified, even if more are located. Homesteader Louie Friedman kept a diary

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

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of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery during the many years since he had arrived here but he had not been able to find it, although was constantly looking for it with the thought that one day the names of the others who came to the colony and were buried here would be known.<sup>24</sup> At the time of this writing, that diary has not been found.

The tombstones at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery are facing east likely because they are facing their homeland, Jerusalem, their unity and their destiny. Jewish Traditional belief is that by facing Jerusalem they are facing their past, their present and their future.<sup>25</sup> The Sons of Jacob Cemetery shows that even on the isolated prairie the Jewish immigrants considered it a high priority to bury their dead in accordance with the customs and traditions of their religion.

### Cemetery Setting



Views of fields, prairie and sky from outside the Sons of Jacob Cemetery fence (camera facing north and west)

The setting of the cemetery is a natural background of waving fields with stretches of prairie among isolated farmsteads and the Great Plains sky. Arriving on a summer's day you will find unbroken native grass and wildflowers blooming along the trail leading to the cemetery, freshly cut grass at the cemetery, the American flag may have been raised and a blue sign with the Star of David stating "Sons of Jacob" can be clearly seen and read. A mailbox stands inside the fence surrounding the cemetery with a guestbook waiting to be signed. Standing under the vast embracing sky visitors experience many emotions from a sense of home to loneliness and isolation. The cemetery does not restrict one's view of the distant horizon, only enhancing its openness and accentuates its vastness.

<sup>24</sup> "History and Stories about and by Immigrants," Isak Edelman, *Garske Colony & Sons of Jacob Cemetery in North Dakota*. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org) Louie Friedman was listed as being on the homestead after 1897 by Isaac Adelman, but was not found in the 1908 Standard Atlas Ramsey County Plat map.

<sup>25</sup> "Why Do Jews Face East?" *United with Israel*. June, 2011. <https://unitedwithisrael.org/why-do-jews-face-east/> accessed April, 2016.



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Sons of Jacob Cemetery entrance sign, woven fence, and guest mailbox

An information sign at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery states the spectacular view at the Cemetery is only heightened via the fact that it is surrounded by a strip of untouched native prairie. The current appearance of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery and access continue as one of the last remaining pieces of native prairie preserved in the region allowing the visitor to view the land in the same way Rachel Calof and the original settlers would have.<sup>26</sup>

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) visited the site in the 1990s and verified the native grass area that stretches from the township road up to the cemetery site. This type of prairie, called Drift Prairie or Glaciated Plains, contains mixed grass with a combination of tall and short grass species and prairie plants. What geologists call the Glaciated Plains is, as the name implies, a glaciated landscape shaped by active ice during the end of the last ice age. The active glaciers formed a landscape that may be characterized as having a gently rolling topography with relief generally less than a hundred feet, although it can be much higher in places. In Ramsey County, it is preserved on a landscape consisting of gently rolling farmland in one of the most important crop producing regions of the state.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Holly Mawby, "Native Prairie Greets Visitors" December 2014, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>27</sup> Workers of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for the State of North Dakota. *North Dakota-A Guide to the Northern Prairie State*. Fargo: Knight Printing Company, 1938, Pg. 5-6.

Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Information signs at Sons of Jacob Cemetery entrance

Upon arrival, the homesteaders faced the challenge of conquering and civilizing nature. Being such a threat and a hindrance it may have been difficult to appreciate the boundless beauty of the prairie. Like the Jewish homesteaders who made progress towards their goal despite circumstances, the prairie plants at the cemetery site thrived because of their deep root systems. These extremely deep roots enable the grasses and flowers to withstand certain conditions others could not survive. These conditions included the following: (1) low amounts of precipitations; (2) long, cold winters, hot summers, and strong winds; and (3) frequent fires.<sup>28</sup> Some viewed the wide western spaces as places of occasional privacy and escape from new family obligations that engulfed and stifled the individuals, especially the women.<sup>29</sup> It provided refuge as well from inside their 12' x 14' shack homes, most likely shared with extended family members. The prairie influenced the significant moments in a person's life with few traditional or recognized Jewish religious holiday celebrations.



Grassland and wildflower photos from [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org), by Shirley LaFleur

<sup>28</sup> Mawby.

<sup>29</sup> J. Sanford Rikoon, ed., *Rachel Calof's Story Jewish Homesteaders on the Northern Plains*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995, Pg. 139. Rachel Calof's memories are documented in the book, *Rachel Calof's Story Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains* and portrayed in a nation-wide theatrical production, *Rachel Calof: A Memoir with Music*. *Rachel Calof's Story* is a first-person memoir of homesteading in North Dakota from 1894-1917, based on Rachel Calof's Yiddish manuscript.

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A Jewish cemetery has physical boundaries that set the cemetery off from its surroundings, making it holy for Jews. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is surrounded by a woven wire and metal post fence with a latched wooden gate honoring the cemetery boundaries. A Jewish cemetery is considered consecrated ground where Jewish burial practices and customs are observed. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is owned by the Jewish community and is for Jewish cemetery purposes. Only Jewish symbols are permitted in the cemetery. Only Jewish clergy or lay people may officiate at a burial service or any other religious service in the cemetery. Just as synagogues preserve Jewish continuity in life, so do Jewish cemeteries preserve Jewish continuity in the afterlife where the lost loved ones await the final call of the Resurrection of the Dead amongst their brethren.

### Historic Integrity

The open prairie itself greatly contributes to the significance of the property. The integrity of the setting and feeling were present in the surrounding area of the cemetery to the following visitors. It was stated by an ancestral visitor from Israel, Joanne Jackson Yelenik, in 2013, "Who would believe that perhaps one of the most carefully and honored Jewish cemetery sites in the world can be found on this untraveled road?"<sup>30</sup> The following letter was written in 2015 by a fourth-generation descendant of the first Jewish settler to the area, Herman Kaufman, with the cemetery originating from the death of H. Kaufman's nineteen-month old son.

Laurel and I have been on our annual trip to Alexandria MN. This year we drove. There was much trepidation as this was the first drive back to Alex' since we lost Deyanne tragically almost two years ago on her way. The drive has been Laurel and my first solo trip since kids. We are loving every mile of it! So much so we went on a little side trip to Devils Lake ND. Where my great great grandfather pioneered, and homesteaded. While I drove, Laurel did a little googling and we found the "Sons of Jacob" cemetery where the first soul buried was an 18-month-old Kaufman child. Although he was placed in a nameless plot, I felt an incredibly strong connection to the place. My namesake Stewart Stern, whose mother Francis Kaufman Stern was born there,<sup>31</sup> found the cemetery and the site of the homestead in the early '70s without the assistance of Google. As we drove down the county road we found the blue arrow and turned down a more primitive dirt road and found the second awaiting beacon. We stopped in front of a little prairie trail, most similarly to the one my forefathers buggied their child on. It was then that I lost the fear of the road ahead of me and I drove my buggie in the form of a minivan forward. I have since lost him this past January but yesterday, it felt like he was standing between Laurel and me as he did when he married us in '97. He honored my spirit as a pioneer for wanting to farm the Agua Linda. It was an honor to stand on the ground those people toiled and wept. Together, Laurel,

<sup>30</sup> Joanne Jackson Yelenik, "A Harvest of Prairie Genealogy in N.D." GrandForksHerald.com, October 31, 2013, Pg. 1-3.

<sup>31</sup> "Francis Stern," *Geni.* and Will Irwin, *The House that Shadows Built*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Pg. 68 state she was born in Chicago after the family moved back to the city.



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Deyanne, Big Stewart and myself transcended time and space and have come away with a magical moment at the Sons of Jacob.<sup>32</sup>

All of the sacred and secular transformations of the landscape made by the Jewish farm families in the region are gone, the rough *mikvah* (the ritual bath prescribed for women at the end of their menstrual period or following the birth of a child) formed by widening and boarding a small portion of an open prairie slough<sup>33</sup>, the schoolhouse where the Jewish children likely studied the Hebrew language and prayers to prepare them for religious life and worldly affairs, and the homes in which religious services and holiday celebrations were conducted. Only the Sons of Jacob Cemetery remains. Nevertheless, from its establishment one hundred and twenty-eight years ago the land has retained its integrity – it has continually remained a sacred Jewish burial ground.

### Maintenance/Ownership of Property

In 1902 the Jewish settlers would discover that what was referred to as the Sons of Jacob Cemetery had been established on unsurveyed land which the Federal Government had subsequently transferred to the State, who then sold it to Mr. Nik Kitsch.<sup>34</sup> Nik Kitsch purchased three quarter sections of land after most of the homesteaders had left the area. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery Association desired the dead rest in peace and not be disturbed. They petitioned ND Governor Frank White to stop the sale of the land, stating the cemetery started on unsurveyed land and long before the State acquired title from the United States. The State sale was not stopped, but Nik Kitsch formally sold the five-acre parcel of the original quarter section to the Sons of Jacob Cemetery Association. A letter dated August 24, 1903 to Phillip Greenberg of Benzion confirmed that upon payment of \$22.55 plus fees the community would own the five acres that includes the cemetery. From the records, the citizens who signed the letter to the Governor and were instrumental in obtaining the cemetery land were Phillip Greenberg, Jacob Goldberg, Abraham Adelman, John Calof, Ike Pyes, Sam Rosenthal, Jake Berkowitch, S.L. Wineman, M. Oxman, Max Pyes, H. Margolis, Moses Calof, Savol Kalov, Maier Calof, I. Becker, Max Torlovizke, D. Rubin, L. Koster, Mrs. Mill, M. Mill, Max Mill, B. Cantor, Woolf Sherowitz and S. Goldberg.<sup>35</sup> The group called themselves “The Russian Hebrew Church Society” of Ramsey County.<sup>36</sup> After obtaining the land, the Sons of Jacob Cemetery Association of Devils Lake organized for the purpose of keeping the Jewish faith alive in the community and was composed of the Jewish people of the city.

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<sup>32</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Generation: Herman and Esther Kaufman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation: Lottie (Kaufman) Zukor (married to Adolph Zukor, sister to Francis (Kaufman) Stern), 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation: Mildred (Zukor) Loew, 4<sup>th</sup> Generation: Stewart Loew

<sup>33</sup> A story told by Francis Kitsch states the Goldberg family lived near The Big Slough or Little Lake where they built a mikvah on the sandy beach. In the fall when thousands of ducks could be found there, Nik Kitsch, a neighbor went there to hunt. When he fired, his horse lunged over the bath facility and destroyed it. Ramsey County North Dakota, Vol. 1, Dallas Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1982. Pg. 19.

<sup>34</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 2. Dallas Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1982, Pg 757.

Nik Kitsch filed on a pre-emption claim on Section 2 of Webster Township in Ramsey County in 1882.

<sup>35</sup> Sons of Jacob Cemetery, *Cemetery Purchase Agreement*, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>36</sup> Rikoon, pg. 124

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We the undersigned have agreed to subscribe and pay the amounts set opposite our names for the purpose of purchasing five acres of land located on the South-East quarter of Section 27, Township 157, Range 65, Ramsey County, North Dakota, for the purpose of holding and continuing with said tract as a cemetery:

Philip Greenberg,	\$ 5 00
Jacob Goldberg,	5 00
Abraham Adelman,	5 00
Jahn Calof,	5 00
Ike Pyes,	5 00
Sam Rosenthal,	1 00
Jake Berkevitch,	5 00
S. L. Wineman,	5 00
M. Oxman,	2 00
Max Pyes,	2 00
H. Margolis,	3 00
Moses Calof,	3 00
Savol Calof,	2 00
Maier Calof,	5 00
<i>L. P. Cohen</i>	5 00
<i>max [unclear]</i>	100 00
<i>Q. Rubin</i>	5 00
<i>L. Kosler</i>	20 00
<i>ms mill</i>	5 00
<i>m mill</i>	5 00
<i>mat mill</i>	5 00
<i>B. Banta</i>	5 00
<i>[unclear]</i>	5 00
<i>Spry Goldberg</i>	3 00
<i>[unclear]</i>	8 00

<i>a calf Paid 20 00</i>	<i>3 00</i>
<i>th calf Paid</i>	<i>1 00</i>
<i>aster calf Paid</i>	<i>1 00</i>
<i>Henry calf Paid</i>	<i>1 00</i>
<i>Fredman Paid</i>	<i>1 50</i>
<i>mat mill Paid</i>	<i>20 00</i>
<i>manil mill Paid</i>	<i>1 75</i>
<i>Jalstafal Paid</i>	<i>5 00</i>
<i>Jke Adelman Paid</i>	<i>3 00</i>
<i>Dev Adelman</i>	<i>3 00</i>
<i>Dev Adelman</i>	<i>1 25</i>
<i>Smith Paid</i>	<i>5 00</i>
	<i>20 00</i>

Names and amounts agreed upon to pay for Sons of Jacob Cemetery land (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

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County Auditor  
Ramsey County

Ch. Auditor  
or Deputy

Devils Lake, N. D., Aug 24<sup>th</sup> 1903.

Mr. Phillip Greenberg,  
Benzion P. D.,

Dear Sir, -

I have rec'd instructions  
from the State Land Department  
in regard to the Jewish Cemetery -  
Mr. Garske + Kitch were in to-day  
and fixed up all the papers they could  
in regard to the matter and instructed  
me to write you, that on payment  
to them of  $10^{00}$  per acre for 5 acres -  $12^{50}$   
and fees to Land Office for changing }  $10^{00}$   
the Contracts }  $22^{50}$   
Total

the deal can be closed so you folks get  
your 5 acres - you may leave the  $22^{50}$  with  
me + I will take care of it.

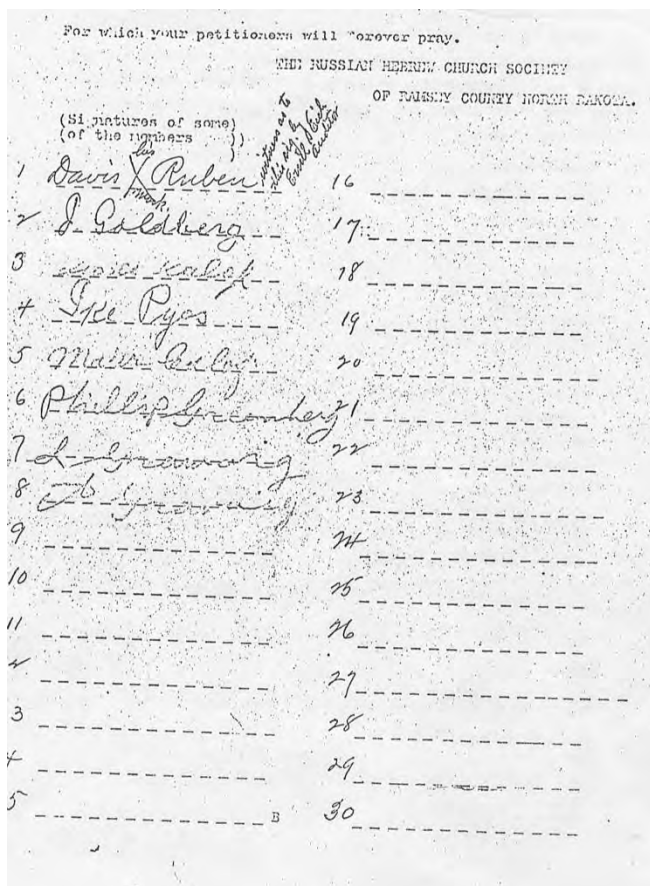
Yours truly  
Emil D. Fish

August 24, 1903 letter to Phillip Greenberg confirming payment \$22.50 for 5 acres of state land for Sons of Jacob Cemetery (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)



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Purchase agreement of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery land with signatures of The Russian Hebrew Church Society of Ramsey County, North Dakota, note Davis Rubin signed with an 'X' witnessed by Emil Eich, Auditor. Other signatures include J. Goldberg, Moses Kalof, Ike Pyes, Maier Calof, Phillip Greenberg, S. Grawoig, and H. Grawoig. (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

### Condition/Repairs

The previous owner of the land, Nik Kitsch, watched over the cemetery by mending the fence and gate as needed to keep cattle out. The Kitsch family considered the Jewish settlers good neighbors and became the cemetery's unofficial caretakers for much of the past century and may have kept it from disappearing off the landscape.

The Sons of Jacob Cemetery was not known to be much visited except by its caretakers until 1966 when a visit from a Minot, ND couple stirred several writings in magazines. In 1971, descendants Stewart Stern, acclaimed Hollywood screenwriter, and his cousin, Jeff Kaufman<sup>37</sup> of Santa Monica, paid their respects and found the cemetery nearly overtaken by native grasses and thick brush. An account in *The Devils Lake Journal* described the visit stating Kaufman took some soil from the prairie and photos to bring to Adolph Zukor who was 99 years old at the

<sup>37</sup> Jeff is the grandson of Albert Kaufman and great-grandson of Herman Kaufman, who is credited with developing the Paramount theatre chain.

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time.<sup>38</sup> Its access road seemed impassable for a car, making walking a quarter mile the only way to arrive at the cemetery. The wire fence was almost covered by tall prairie grass with a rusted iron pipe gate entrance. As awareness became more prevalent, descendants and a local Sons of Jacob Cemetery Committee, who consider the care of the cemetery an essential religious and social responsibility, have raised money to research and restore the cemetery. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery Committee is currently made up of members from Devils Lake, Fargo, and Starkweather, ND; Mendota Heights and Golden Valley, MN; and New York City.



Solomon Calof's headstone being cleaned in 2012. (photo source [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org))

In 2012 the cemetery underwent professional restoration with headstones reset onto individual concrete plinths. Years of lichen, moss, and dirt were carefully washed off the tombstones.<sup>39</sup> Also in the summer of 2016 the headstones and fieldstone monuments received professional cleaning by Joan Youngerman of Cando, ND. Mary Beth Armentrout, along with her brother, Daniel Kitsch, and Mike Connor have been the main caretakers of the cemetery for many years. With the cemetery in the community care, the gravestones and the land are presently very well maintained.

Mike Connor, a member of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery Committee whose family homestead is two miles west and one-quarter mile north of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery said, "My parents always talked about how tough the Jewish settlers had it at the turn of the century. They went through some times that we couldn't imagine."<sup>40</sup> An individual whose family name is on the memorial at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery helped Connor's parents through a very stressful time during their early married years, and when his father asked "how can I ever repay you?" the individual replied "Your parents helped my parents, now it is my turn to help you."<sup>41</sup> Mike and

<sup>38</sup> John Zaleski Jr., "In the Shadows of the Past." *North Dakota Horizons Magazine*, Spring 1978, Pg. 6-8.

<sup>39</sup> Events, Updates & Additions June, 2012, *Remodeling and restoration*, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>40</sup> "Kansas Memorial to be dedicated to honor Jewish homesteaders," *The Wichita Eagle*, September 16, 2006, Pg. 1-2. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>41</sup> Mike Connor, "Reflections on the Dedication," [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

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Ellen Connor have also assisted with the seasonal upkeep of the cemetery, greeting visitors, raising the American flag on holidays and special event days, and checking the guest mailbox.

The Sons of Jacob Cemetery and native prairie area remain nearly as it was in the 1880s-1930s; however, visitors in this century travel on a paved highway, an improved gravel township road, and finally a maintained prairie trail to visit the cemetery. With the present upkeep, visitors and ancestors coming from afar will receive a much more welcoming experience, while still evoking feelings of the Jewish settlers' past. Visitors during the summer of 2016 included persons from North Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Washington, New York and international visitors from Israel and Iran.

Hal Ettinger, formerly of Lawrence, Kansas, knowing his great-grandfather, Simon Ettinger,<sup>42</sup> was buried in a Jewish cemetery near Devils Lake, went in search of him and, with help from Ramsey County courthouse workers, found the cemetery in October 2004.<sup>43</sup> Hal Ettinger discovered Simon Ettinger's *kever* (grave), a mound of earth encircled by rocks with a rusted metal headstone, etched with his name and date of death, August 28, 1891. The date linked Hal Ettinger, the last of the male Ettinger's, whose birthday was August 28, with the first male Ettinger in America. This linkage was very dramatic for Hal and he decided a campaign was needed to raise funds for a monument as a tribute to the preservation of the memories of the descendants buried in the cemetery.<sup>44</sup>

The Devils Lake Area Foundation donated money towards the permanent granite monument now marking the resting place of homesteaders who came to the area between 1882 and 1935. The granite monument, standing as a reminder of the Jewish pioneers' struggle, honors and lists 104 names of the original 1880s Jewish Homesteaders of the Garske Colony.<sup>45</sup> Dedicated September 17, 2006, the granite monument was made possible with donations from descendants and others from all over the United States.

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<sup>42</sup> "History and Stories about and by Immigrants," Isak Edelman, Grawoig Family, Simon and Sophia Ettinger, Wilensky and Rubin Families," *Garske Colony & Sons of Jacob Cemetery in North Dakota*. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org) Jewish immigrant, Simon Ettinger, had arrived at the Garske Colony in 1886. He died just six months after gaining free title to 160 acres. His widow, with five young children, then moved away with a total of \$10 to their name.

<sup>43</sup> Cole.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> The names were gathered by Myer Shark, who was sort of the expert in this regard, and volunteers Hal Ettinger and Dennis Kitsch, who researched land office and register of deeds records (before and after statehood) for this area of Ramsey County to secure a list of early Jewish homesteaders. There was no date range as all available public land records were researched for the area involved. Some of the Jewish homesteaders lived here only a short time and never proved up their claims, some sold their land after homesteading was completed and moved on, others lived here for several years before selling their land and moving to other communities in ND or other states.

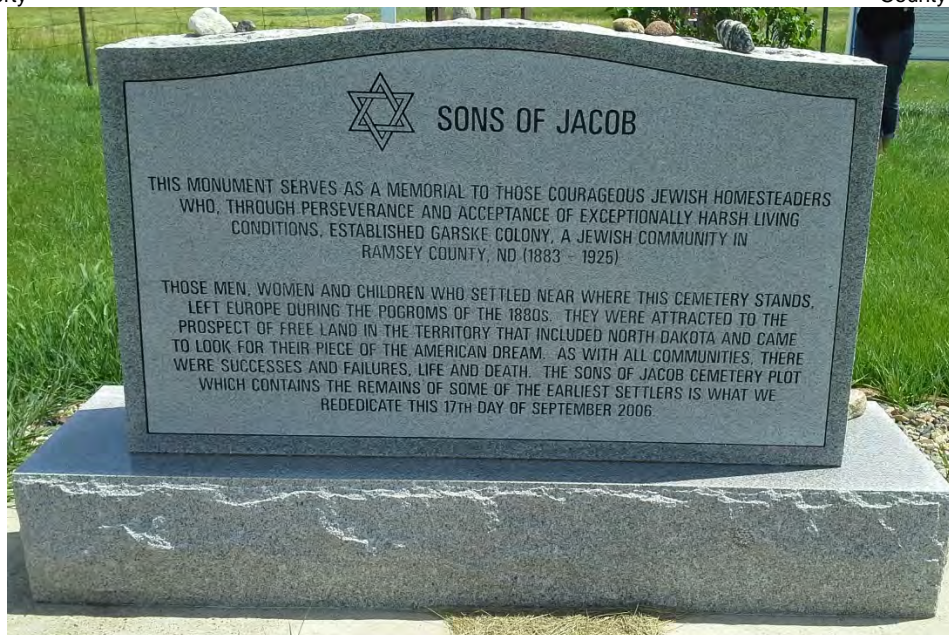


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Memorial monument to Jewish homesteaders at Garske Colony, note the small remembrance stones placed on top of monument (camera facing east)

Inscribed on the monument are the words:

Side one

Sons of Jacob

This monument serves as a memorial to those courageous Jewish Homesteaders who through perseverance and acceptance of exceptionally harsh living conditions, established Garske Colony a Jewish community in Ramsey County, North Dakota (1883-1925).

Those men, women and children who settled near where this cemetery stands left Europe during the pogroms of the 1880s. They were attracted to the prospect of free land on the Territory that included ND and came to look for their piece of the American Dream. As with Jewish communities, there were successes and failures, life and death. The Sons of Jacob Cemetery plot which contains the remains of some of the earliest settlers is what we rededicate this 17th day of September, 2006.

Side two

Jewish Homesteaders

Charley Abraham	Herman Friedman	Love Kaslow	Max Pyes
Abraham Adelman	Jacob Friedman	Albert Kaufman	Abraham Rackner
Joseph Adelman	Lena Friedman	Herman Kaufman	Sam Rosenthal
Pit Alswang	Zenda Gilman	Abraham Kempinsky	Israel M. Rosenwate
Isaac Becker	Joseph J. Goldberg	Simon Klizen	Bessie Rubin
Jake Berkowitz	Sam Goldberg	Biney Kohn	Davis Rubin
Levi Britsk	Solomon Goldberg	Max Kohn	David Schapera

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Israel Buchmann	Solomon Goldstein	Mosko Kolov	Isaac Schapera
Abram Calof	Louis Gooderman	Abraham Leschensky	Josef Schapera
Maier Calof	Hemis Grawoig	Mendel Levitz	Samuel C. Schapera
Barnett Cantor	Abraham Greenberg	Hyman Liberman	Jacob Schecter
Fred Cantor	Ben Greenberg	Rachel Lieberman	Halleck Schecter
Simon Clitchen	Mollie Greenberg	Sarah Lieberman	Esther Schlemison
Katie Cohen	Phillip Greenberg	H. Margolis	Max Schulmson
Rueben Cohen	Benie Greenberg	Louis Mavil	Abraham Sherman
Louis Colosky	Jacob Grossman	Israel Mill	Wolf Sherowitz
Aron Comonow	Joseph W. Grossman	Max Mill	Jacob Solomenske
Sarah Comonow	Herman Hoffman	Michael Moschitska	Isaac Spieror
Theodore Dekeyzer	David Hollander	Heims Nathan	Abe Steren
Ida U. Delavech	Max Hollander	Simon Nathan	Hyman Walk
Isaac Delavech	Sam Hollander	Nudelman	S.L. Wineman
Isaac Edelman	Nathan Horwitz	M. Oxman	Emma Wolf
Simon Ettinger	Luis Kahan	Charles Parks	Jacob Wolf
Laser Filis	Savol Kalov	Abraham Penner	Max Wolfson
Dora Frankel	Solomon Kalov	Moses Plentnichky	John Yaffe
Aron Friedman	Herc Kaplon	Ike Pyes	Joseph Zunich

At the dedication, Lay Rabbi Kobrinsky stood next to the new granite monument, named all the pioneers and chanted the Eyl Molei Rachamin in Hebrew: God full of compassion, grant rest to these people and may they find peace in your sheltering wings.<sup>46</sup> The cemetery and monument represent the pride of the descendants in the homesteaders for their ability to endure the hardships they encountered to build a new life. More than 70 people attended the dedication ceremony. The attendees engaged in the Jewish custom of placing small stones on a grave marker to show it has been visited.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Cole.

<sup>47</sup> Photographs by Leighton Siegel, Cemetery overview and all markers Dedication Ceremony; Connor.

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## Rabbi Janeen Kobrinsky of Fargo, ND leads the rededication service



Rededication service September 17, 2006 of monument (slide from "A Journey Through Time" by Hal Ettinger)

Visitors to the Sons of Jacob Cemetery follow the tradition of placing small stones at the grave. The origin of this goes back to Biblical times when graves were often marked with a pile of stones. After some time, the elements made the stones disperse, and it was necessary for the piles to be built up again. At the dedication of the Sons of Jacob Memorial the Rabbi explained the tradition of placing a small rock or pebble on the headstone of a loved one when visiting a cemetery. Nowadays, we mark stones with a permanent marble or granite monument. By placing a pebble on the grave, the visitor is helping preserve the memory of the deceased. Just as the stone lasts forever, so too does the soul live forever. Another thought is that by placing pebbles on the grave, it shows that respects are still being paid and that the deceased is still loved and remembered.

At the St. Paul presentation of the *Rachel Calof Play* in 2013 Mike Connor stated

Finally, I remembered the Rabbi at the cemetery explaining those pebbles on the headstones of loved ones and realized that those pebbles had also been cast into the pond that makes up humanity. Ever since 2006 the ripples caused by those pebbles landing in the pond draw more and more people together every day to celebrate Rachel Calof's story and the others who made up the Garske colony over 100 years ago.<sup>48</sup>

The broader importance of recognizing the unique story of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery is indicated by the greetings sent by the congressional delegation of U.S. Senators Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad along with U.S. Representative Earl Pomeroy, to everyone in attendance at the dedication of the memorial in September 2006.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Names of the Original Homesteaders, *Congress of the United States 9-15-2006*, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

<sup>49</sup> Media and other Recognition, *Congress of the United States 9-15-2006*, [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Religion
- Social History
- Agriculture
- Exploration/Settlement

**Period of Significance**

1888-1935  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

**Criterion A - Property reflects historic and artistic importance**

The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is significant under National Register Criterion A, as it is associated with events having an international interest and has made a significant contribution to the shaping of history at the local level. Specifically, the Sons of Jacob Cemetery is the only permanent physical reminder of the Ramsey County Jewish farming community and the oldest Jewish homesteader cemetery in North Dakota. It contains tombstones that are clearly distinct including natural field stones with carved art, one of the most notable expressions of traditional Jewish art. This unique culture of stone carving reached a particularly high level of development in the Pale of Settlement where the tombstones were honored as sacred relics in cemeteries and was brought to America by the Eastern European Jews. The Garske Colony was the second settled Jewish rural area of the state with Jewish pioneers arriving in 1882. The first settlement

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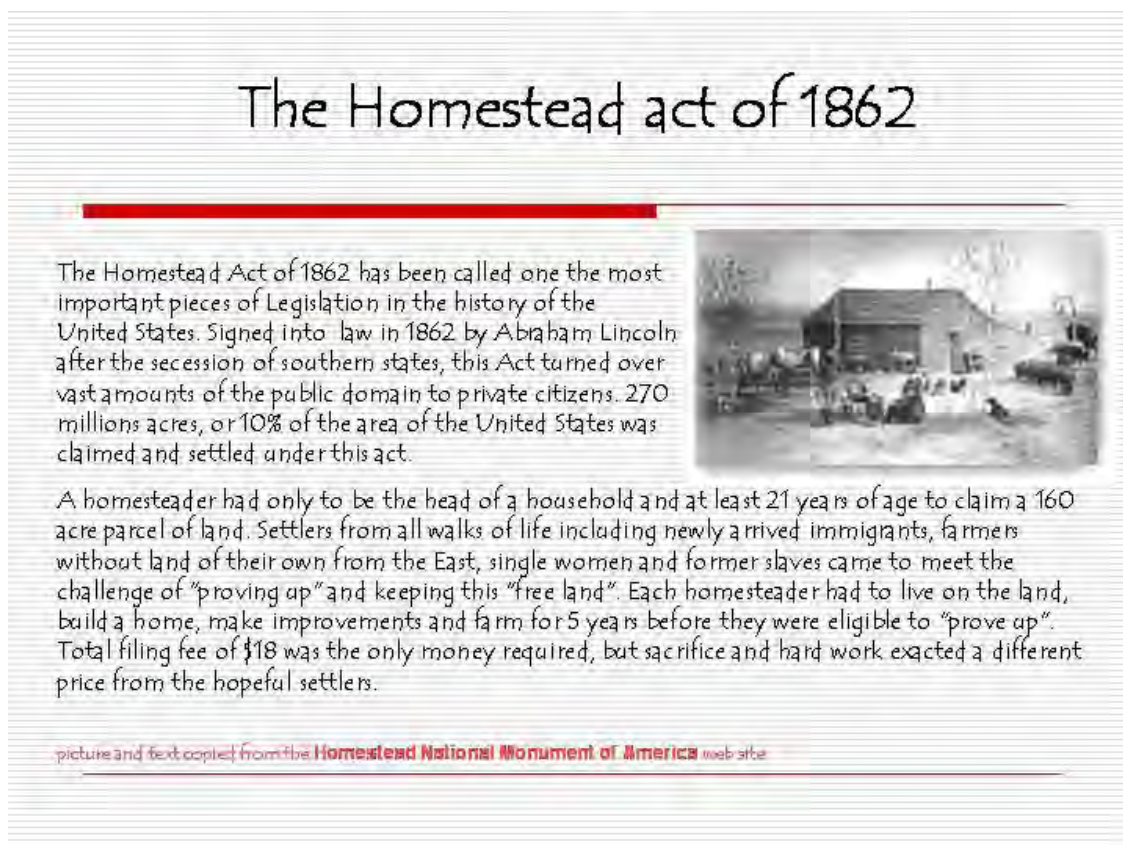
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began earlier in 1882 about two hundred miles to the southwest and was known as Painted Woods.<sup>50</sup> Eventually 108 Jewish men and women would file homestead claims in Ramsey County. The property has significance from 1888, the estimated date of the first burial of a Jewish homesteader's child, through 1935, the year of the last homesteader's burial in the cemetery.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

## INTRODUCTION: RAMSEY COUNTY AND THE HOMESTEAD ACT



The Homestead Act of 1862 has been called one of the most important pieces of legislation in the history of the United States. Signed into law in 1862 by Abraham Lincoln after the secession of southern states, this Act turned over vast amounts of the public domain to private citizens. 270 million acres, or 10% of the area of the United States was claimed and settled under this act.

A homesteader had only to be the head of a household and at least 21 years of age to claim a 160 acre parcel of land. Settlers from all walks of life including newly arrived immigrants, farmers without land of their own from the East, single women and former slaves came to meet the challenge of "proving up" and keeping this "free land". Each homesteader had to live on the land, build a home, make improvements and farm for 5 years before they were eligible to "prove up". Total filing fee of \$18 was the only money required, but sacrifice and hard work exacted a different price from the hopeful settlers.

picture and text copied from the [Homestead National Monument of America](#) website

Slide from "A Journey Through Time" by Hal Ettinger

Ramsey County was part of the Dakota Territory formed in 1861 that included North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming. On May 20, 1862 Congress passed the Homestead Act, which offered a free 160-acre tract of land to anyone over 21 years of age who would live on it

<sup>50</sup> William C. Sherman, Playford V. Thorson, Warren A. Henke, Timothy J. Klobberdanz, Theodore B. Pedeliski, Robert P. Wilkins. *Plains Folk North Dakota's Ethnic History*, Fargo, North Dakota: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University: North Dakota Humanities Council: University of North Dakota 1986, Pg. 391-392.



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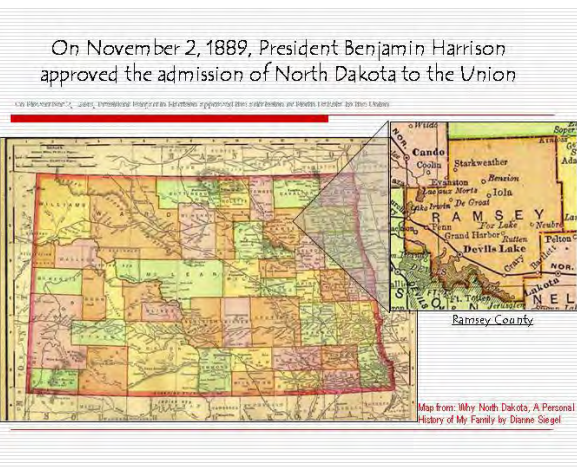
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for five years, cultivate and improve the acreage.<sup>51</sup> Although Dakota Territory was opened to settlers in 1863, prospective settlers stayed away because of the Civil War, Indian raids, the financial panic of 1873, reports of blizzards, droughts, grasshoppers, and the absence of transportation.

After the Civil War ended in 1865 and the army had control over most of the Indians, immigrants looked to the lands of the West for a place to make a living.<sup>52</sup> In 1873, the boundaries of Dakota Territory were reduced to include what is now North Dakota and South Dakota. Ramsey County was created by the 1872-73 territorial legislature and organized on January 25, 1883.<sup>53</sup> It was named for Alexander Ramsey, first Governor of Minnesota Territory. It is approximately centered in the northeast region of North Dakota.



Dakota Territory Map



Slide from "A Journey Through Time" by Hal Ettinger

Mass emigration was inspired by the poverty and famine combined with ongoing persecutions and killings that shaped the life of the Russian Jews during the late 1800s making it very unpleasant for them. Between 1880 and 1910, 1.25 million discouraged Russian Jews set out to immigrate to America. A great number of them made homes in New York City, Chicago, and St. Paul taking jobs in factory sweatshops, generally associated with the needle trade industry.

<sup>51</sup> Homestead Act (1862),

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=31> accessed 2016.

<sup>52</sup> Lois Fields Schwartz, "Early Jewish Agricultural Colonies in North Dakota." *North Dakota History* 32 (4), October 1965, Pg. 217.

<sup>53</sup> Henry Hale, "Pertinent Facts of Early History of Ramsey County," *Pioneers' Association Devils Lake Region*, 1925. Pg. 32. The boundaries of Ramsey have been changed a number of times. By Chapter 12, Laws 1883, the boundary was as far south as the section line between Township 150 and as far north as the section line between Township 156 and 157, the east boundary was the line between Ranges 61 and 62 except that it jugged out to include the Townships of Bartlett and Hope. By Chapter 32 Laws 1885 the lands south of the south shore of Devils lake was attached to Benson County and Township 157 and 158 Ranges 62, 63 and 64 were added to Ramsey County on the north and the Townships of Norway, Coulee and Irvine were attached to the County on the west. Under Chapter 201 Laws of 1890 eight townships on the east, 155, 156, 157 and 158 Ranges 60 and 61 were added to the County- at that time they were in no man's land, not a part of any county.

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Those who preferred rural living could take advantage of the Homestead Act and set out to set up farms in the West.

These Russian Jewish immigrants were intensely religious and brought an ultra-orthodox form of Judaism (the religion developed among the ancient Hebrews that stresses belief in God and faithfulness to the laws of the Torah: the religion of the Jewish people) to the Garske Colony where they kept the rituals and customs of their heritage under the severest conditions even though it was a grave hardship. With hard work and perseverance, they believed they could make a better life in America, their new homeland, than they ever could have in Russia.

Ramsey County's population in 1880 was 33.5% immigrant and by 1890 it was up to 42%. Ramsey County's total population in 1880 was 281 and from mainly immigration and reproduction rose to over 15,000 by 1920. In 1890 North Dakota's population was 44% female and about the same number of foreign born, more than in any other census region.

The few pioneers who settled in the area before 1885 were most likely not counted in that year's U.S. Dakota Territory census. The farm experiment was many times a fleeting one, lasting between one and five years for most settlers who could have come and left an area before a census taker even visited their homestead. No agency ever undertook a religious census of farmers during the time period of early Jewish settlement. The state was very sparsely populated until the arrival of the railroads in the late 1800s and became our 39th State in 1889. The entire northern portion of Ramsey County was nearly vacant of settlement until the late 1890s. Ramsey County barely recognized some of these northern townships until about 1900 as the names of area settlers are missing from the Ramsey County tax rolls prior to that date.<sup>54</sup>

When the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern Railroads began laying tracks across Dakota Territory, the population of the State increased as the plans to build a railroad became known. People, including Jewish entrepreneurs who intended to establish a Jewish settlement, bought up land hoping that the railroad would need their land for westward development.<sup>55</sup> Speculative towns were Jerusalem in Ramsey County Twp. 152-62 and Odessa Twp. 152-62, founded by immigrants from a city of that name in their homeland.<sup>56</sup> An attempt to establish a Jewish settlement in 1881, 12 miles south of Lakota, at Stump Lake, gambled on the railroad which unfortunately chose a different route 10 miles to the north and within a year, the area was abandoned.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to the Jewish colonies, there were individual Jewish farmers throughout the state of North Dakota who homesteaded land beginning about 1880 until World War I such as Jacob Wolf (one of the original 1880s Jewish homesteaders of the Garske Colony).<sup>58</sup> German Jewish

<sup>54</sup> Gail Haugen Melland and Dorothy Strand Johnson, *Edmore, N.D. and Countryside Tales Beyond "No Man's Land" 1901-2001*, Grafton, ND: Morgan Printing, 2001, Pg. 8.

<sup>55</sup> Mary Ann Barnes Williams, *Origins of North Dakota Place Names*. Washburn North Dakota, January 1966, Pg. 212-240.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, Pg. 238, 240.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, Pg. 216.

<sup>58</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 229.

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immigrant Samuel Thal and family members arrived in Dakota Territory in 1876 and settled 320 acres at Harrisburg in Hope Township, Ramsey County S ½ Section 15, approximately 14 miles southeast of Garske and 30 miles east of Devils Lake, North Dakota. They also homesteaded in bordering Dodds Township, Nelson County<sup>59</sup> and Adler Township, Nelson County Sec 4, which was named for an early Jewish pioneer, Charles Adler.<sup>60</sup>

Reform German Jews had migrated in the 1830s, before the Russian Jews, and for the most part succeeded easily in America because they were not “too Jewish.” The Reform German Jews resented the Russian Jews. To the German Jews the word “Russia” meant uneducated and backward. They thought these poor, Yiddish speaking, intensely religious Jews reflected badly on them and tried to get the Russian Jews to assimilate as quickly as possible. Their real underlying fear was anti-Semitism, which would cause social isolation and other types of discrimination.<sup>61</sup> Rabbi Judah Wechsler, who was also a leader and organizer of Painted Woods, (the first Jewish agricultural colony settled in North Dakota consisting of 11 Russian Jewish families northwest of Bismarck) tried to change the views towards the new immigrants stating, “The fact remains, they are among us. They are our kindred, and it is our duty to elevate them to a higher place to become good citizens of this country.”<sup>62</sup>



Rabbi Judah Wechsler (photo from Minnesota Reflections)

In 1850 about 17,000 Jews lived in America and in 1880 there were about 270,000. By 1880 the Jewish population of New York City was 180,000. At the beginning of the 1900s there were 64,000 families packed into 6,000 tenement houses, and that would soon grow to 1.8 million, with most living in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> “Sarah Thal.” *Jewish Women’s Archive*. <http://jwa.org/westernpioneers/that-sarah> accessed June 2016.

Mrs. Thal recounts those that died on the prairie: “...my baby died unattended. I never forgave the prairies for that. He was buried in the lot with Mrs. Seliger and her child who froze to death in a blizzard and a baby of the (Mike) Mendelson’s. For many years, we kept up the lonely graves. In time the wolves and elements destroyed them. They are unmarked in all save my memory.”

<sup>60</sup> Williams, Pg. 212.

<sup>61</sup> Sherman, *Plains Folk North Dakota's Ethnic History*, Pg. 390.

<sup>62</sup> Dr. W. Gunther Plaut, “Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake,” *North Dakota History* 32 (1), January 1965, Pg. 65.

<sup>63</sup> “Jewish Life in America,” *Judaism Online*.

[http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/jewish\\_life\\_in\\_america/](http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/jewish_life_in_america/)



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Lower East Side of Manhattan circa 1900 (Photo by Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

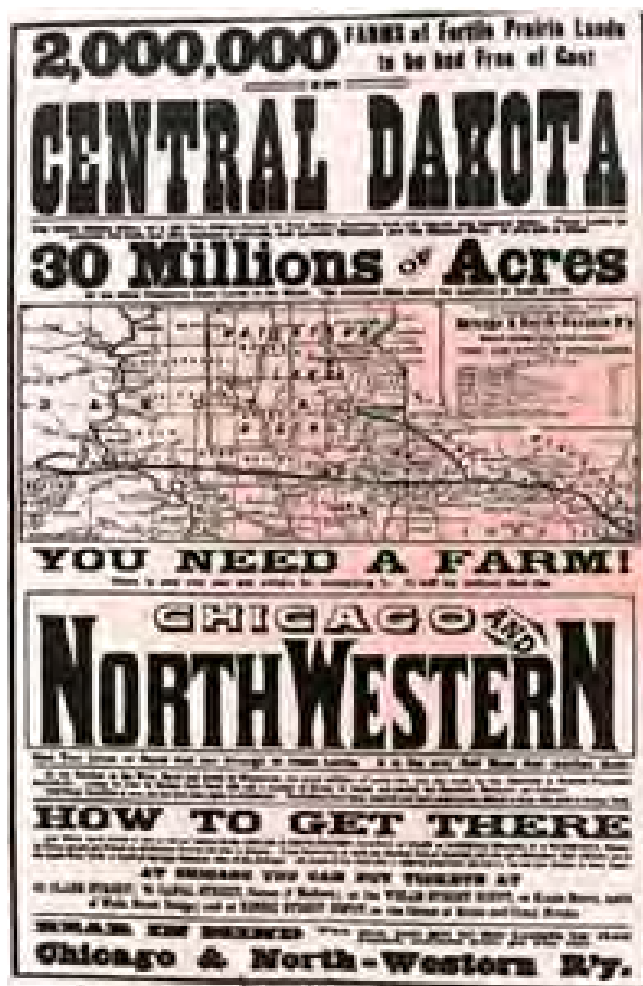
In 1883 James J. Hill's extension of railroad tracks had reached Devils Lake. There was furious competition among the railroad companies of the Soo Line, the Northern Pacific, the Manitoba Railway, and the Great Northern in the great open area of northern Dakota Territory to run track east and west, north and south. With promotion of the state by the railroads and land speculators, thousands of settlers came in the greatest rush of people to North Dakota that would ever be. From 1900-1910 North Dakota grew 81 percent, attracting 300,000 people. Devils Lake grew 200 percent with some of the greatest growth on the drift prairie. During this time the population grew faster than farmers' ability to produce food and farmers enjoyed booming crop prices.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> D. Jerome Tweton, Theodore B. Jelliff. *North Dakota: the Heritage of a People*, Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1976, Pg. 78-81, 126-129.

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Railroad Homestead Free Land Promotion Advertising 1870s circa (image source [www.alamy.com](http://www.alamy.com))

## **1. Why Russian Jews Immigrated to Ramsey County North Dakota to Farm in the Late 1880s-Early 1900s**

### **A. Conditions Caused by the Russian Czars-Pale of the Settlement-Pogroms**

The reason for the massive migration of Russian and East European immigrants that began in 1881 and ended in 1920 with a population of 3,500,000 Jews in the United States is found in the history of nineteenth century Russia.

During the years 1791-1915 the majority of Jews living in Eastern Europe were confined by the Czars of Russia to a region of western Russia designated as the “Pale of Settlement” (meaning “borders of settlement”). They were forbidden to buy or rent land outside The Pale. Jewish artisans were no longer allowed to work outside the Pale. Stretching from the Baltic Sea to Black Sea, it consisted of 25 provinces that included Ukraine, Lithuania, Belorussia, Crimea, and much

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of Poland.<sup>65</sup> Almost 2,000,000 Jews entered the United States between 1800 and 1920 from lands that were part of Russia.<sup>66</sup>



Pale of the Settlement Map (image source Topographic Maps of Europe)

In 1882, 500,000 Jews would be removed from rural areas within the Pale and limited to live only in *shtetls*, (a small Jewish town or village in Eastern Europe). The modern *Yeshiva* (school for Torah study) grew in the Pale, previously a luxury only available to the elite masses of Eastern Europe Jewry. While in the Pale the *shtetl yeshiva*-educated rabbis preached against immigration fearing the assimilation in America instead of welcoming the possible opportunities and did not emigrate along with the masses of Jews.

With Jews as the classic scapegoats for the financial problems of Russia, in 1881 the Czarist Russian government organized pogroms against the Jews that kept the eyes of the masses off the corrupt regime.<sup>67</sup> A pogrom is an organized massacre of an ethnic group, in particular that of Jews in Russia or Eastern Europe. The Russian pogroms lasted intermittently until 1905 and were primarily responsible for the Jewish migration from Russia to the United States. In

<sup>65</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 129.

<sup>66</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 219.

<sup>67</sup> "The Pale of the Settlement," *Simple to Remember Judaism Online*.

[http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/the\\_czars\\_and\\_the\\_jews/](http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/the_czars_and_the_jews/) accessed June 6, 2016.



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America, there was hope for political and social freedom, economic opportunity, and hope for their physical well-being.<sup>68</sup>



Cartoon by Emil Flohri called “Stop Your Cruel Oppression of the Jews” shows an aged man labeled “Russian Jew” carrying a large bundle labeled “Oppression” on his back. Hanging from the bundle are weights labeled “Autocracy,” “Robbery,” “Cruelty,” “Assassination,” “Deception,” and “Murder.” Cartoon depicts the reasons why Jews immigrated to America, a place of acceptance. These were the things Jews were trying to get away from—they wanted to assimilate and not be judged on their religious views. Theodore Roosevelt is seen talking to Emperor Nicholas. (Image source Library of Congress)



Pogrom Map (image source ONEDARINGJEW)

<sup>68</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 230.

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### **B. Military Conscription**

Many Eastern European Jews, whose ancestors immigrated to America, do not know how or where their surname originated. The Jewish people living in small towns and villages had little use for hereditary surnames since most people knew each other, and patronymics or nicknames were used instead of surnames. The traditional naming practices changed with the Czar's laws of 1804 and 1835 and forced the Jewish families in Russia and Poland to take family names. These decrees required every Jew's name to always remain without changes as their known inherited or legally adopted surname.<sup>69</sup> Although instances of illegal surname changes did occur, especially among those who tried to avoid military conscription in the Russian army.

The bulk of the long years of military service fell on the poor and uneducated who could not buy or earn their freedom. In 1881, decrees called for the mandated conscription of Jewish males, between the ages of 12 and 18, into the Russian Army with the requirement to serve for as many as 16 to 25 years.<sup>70</sup> Due to the horrendous conditions under which they were forced to serve, many of the boys who were conscripted did not survive, and of those who did, few continued to identify themselves as Jews. As far as the Jewish community was concerned, either way was a death sentence.

Some, like Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster, who served the Garske Colony, managed to avoid reporting for military service to the Russian Army without being caught and sent to Siberia. The thought of America being the answer to that problem entered his mind during his years evading military service. He vowed his sons would never serve the Czar.<sup>71</sup> Others, like Chaim Greenberg, chose to leave Russia immediately after he was drafted to avoid that fate.

The Greenberg family of the Garske Colony is inclined to believe that the three young men of their family used the name '*Himmler*' to avoid the military service when they departed Russia.<sup>72</sup> It is also believed that Jewish Russian immigrant Davis Rubin's surname was not the original family name. Descendants speculate the original name may have been "Reuben." It may have been a name he acquired or bought to stay out of the Russian army, or it could have been the name of the family who brought Davis out of Russia. Another possibility is he could have Americanized his name upon arrival. Jewish immigrants frequently changed their own surnames, often during the period between immigration and naturalization. The thought being that in America, it was more advantageous to have an American-sounding surname.

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<sup>69</sup> "Jewish Surnames in the Russian Empire | Surname DNA Journal History," *History, Adoption, and Regulation of Jewish Surnames in the Russian Empire*.

<http://www.surnamedna.com/?articles=history-adoption-and-regulation-of-jewish-surnames-in-the-russian-empire> accessed April 2016.

<sup>70</sup> "The Czars and the Jews," *Simple to Remember Judaism Online*.

[http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/the\\_czars\\_and\\_the\\_jews/](http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/the_czars_and_the_jews/) accessed June 6, 2016.

<sup>71</sup> Isadore Papermaster, "History of the North Dakota Jews Community," November 28, 1956.

[www.bnaiisraelnd.org/papermaste](http://www.bnaiisraelnd.org/papermaste).

<sup>72</sup> "History and Stories about and by Immigrants," Grawoig Family, *Garske Colony & Sons of Jacob Cemetery in North Dakota*. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

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Garske Colony family members differed in transliterations of their last name into English (e.g. Calof, Kalov, and Kalof; Rubin, Reubens). There was no great allegiance felt towards the name chosen or thrust upon them and they changed it as they saw fit. The surnames given them may have been based upon the places they were from, the occupation they had, their nickname, their spouse's surname, their parents' given name, the decisions of the *Kahal* (local Jewish community councils), or the whims of the local Russian authorities. The consequence of this production of new surnames on such a great scale, was the loss of family contacts and connections across the generations.

A significant Jewish colony began forming around Devils Lake in 1882, after the problems of Russia got worse when Czar Alexander II, (who ruled from 1855-1881) was assassinated. He had been thought of as one of the more effective Czars and was considerably kind to the Jews.<sup>73</sup> When the problems got more serious for the Russians, they intensified for the Jews. The government of the new Czar, Alexander III, (who ruled 1881-1894) organized one pogrom after another to keep the anger of the masses focused on the Jews. He also proclaimed the May Laws against the Jews which included the following prohibitions:

1. "It is henceforth forbidden for Jews to settle outside the cities and townships."
2. "The registration of property and mortgages in the names of Jews is to be halted temporarily. Jews are also prohibited from administering such properties."
3. "It is forbidden for Jews to engage in commerce on Sundays and Christian holidays."<sup>74</sup>

Writes Berel Wein in *Triumph of Survival* of the reign of Alexander III:

"Expulsions, deportations, arrests, and beatings became the daily lot of the Jews, not only of their lower class, but even of the middle class and the Jewish intelligentsia. The government of Alexander III waged a campaign of war against its Jewish inhabitants. The Jews were driven and hounded, and emigration appeared to be the only escape from the terrible tyranny of the Romanovs."<sup>75</sup>

The vast majority of the Jewish immigrants arrived in America between 1881 and 1914, including the violent years for the Jewish people of 1903-1907, when the Russian government sponsored 284 pogroms with over 50,000 deaths.<sup>76</sup> From 1881 to about the middle of 1882 an excess of 18,000 Jewish refugees arrived in New York City from southern Russia. Families, single men and single women came to escape the cruel persecution of the Russian Czar.<sup>77</sup>

The Russian Jew of the nineteenth century was not a Russian citizen, he was only a Jew. He was never encouraged to have a nationalistic feeling for Russia. In the mass emigration of Jews out of Russia 50,000 or more left every year to an estimated total of 2.5 million.<sup>78</sup> When the masses of

<sup>73</sup> "The Czars and the Jews."

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Dr. Gerhard Falk, "Jewish Immigration," *Jewish Buffalo on the Web*, <http://www.jbuff.com/c121400.htm> accessed April 2016.

<sup>78</sup> "The Czars and the Jews."



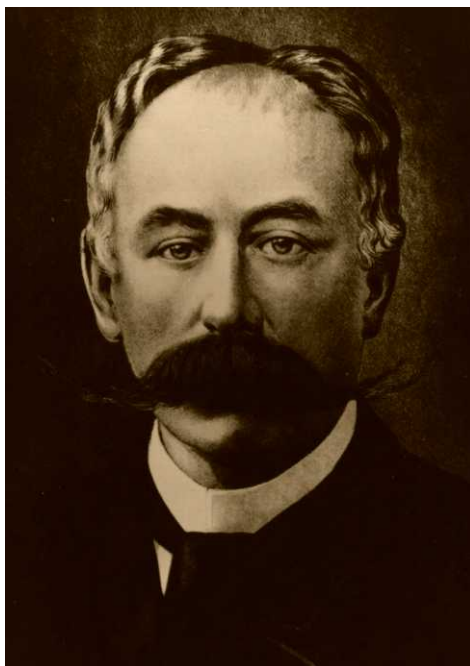
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poor non-English speaking Jews of Russia arrived in America, their main destination between 1881 and 1914, they were penniless, homeless and jobless. There was no Jewish infrastructure in place making life in the New World much harder, but they had little or nothing to lose. They spoke the language of Eastern European Jews, Yiddish, and their life centered around their religion and the synagogue. The Eastern European peddlers and small merchants set up their own synagogues: Sons of Jacob (1869) in St. Paul. Most settlers to Garske Colony had no acculturation process in the eastern U.S. before arriving in North Dakota.

**C. Jewish Philanthropy Organizations: Baron Maurice de Hirsch Fund, Jewish Colonization Association (Hebrew Emigrant Aid), Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, Industrial Removal Office, Jewish Agriculturalists Aid Society in America and the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society**

Baron Maurice de Hirsch, born into an affluent and well-connected Jewish family, was a banker and a philanthropist who lived in Munich, Brussels and Paris. He acquired a large fortune from banking, railroads, copper mines and various other interests. His total benefactions exceeded \$100 million, mostly to the Jewish causes. His purpose was to relieve physical and mental human suffering.



Baron de Hirsch, 1831-1896 (American Jewish Archives)

He believed that Jews would be better accepted in the "New Country" if they were more like the already existing population and that translated into farming. He first tried to improve the condition of the Jews in Russia, but he decided that the political climate of that time was not in agreement with his ideas. On September 11, 1891 he established the Baron de Hirsch Fund with

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the aim of aiding Jewish immigrants to the United States and promoting the establishment of rural centers there.<sup>79</sup>

In 1891 Baron de Hirsch founded the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA) with an initial startup of \$10 million and the goal of helping Russian Jews emigrate to agricultural colonies in a country and area favorable to them. Baron de Hirsch was convinced that Jews were ideally suited to till the soil, believing that they had been among the world's first successful pastoral civilizations. He once said in an interview that in the end he hoped "my efforts shall show that the Jews have not lost the agricultural qualities that their forefathers possessed." The *Jewish Encyclopedia* quoted him as saying, "I shall try to make for them a new home in different lands, where, as free farmers, on their own soil, they can make themselves useful to the country."<sup>80</sup> The Baron de Hirsch Fund became the main organ used by ICA to do its work in the U.S. of providing credit facilities for the immigrants. Davis Rubin, of the Garske Colony, was one of those who immigrated in the early 1890s to New York and became interested in what the Baron De Hirsch Colonization Project offered.

In 1900 the two organizations jointly established the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society (JAIAS, later the Jewish Agricultural Society, JAS). The JAIAS listed its first objective as "the encouragement and direction of agriculture among Jews in America and the removal of those working in crowded metropolitan sections to agricultural and industrial districts." It offered many forms of hope for the immigrant to rise economically, socially, to ward off anti-Semitism, and to have the privilege of owning property. Regardless of all attempts to become farmers in Russia they could not succeed as the Russian government denied them the privilege to purchase and own land.<sup>81</sup> This resulted in immigrants who were tradesmen and knew little about agriculture. Jacob Gordin, after his arrival in America, wrote a proposal to establish an organized colony in a memorandum to the Agricultural Committee of the Baron De Hirsch Fund August 1, 1891. Persecution had become unbearable and besides a moral decision, he stated four reasons to engage in an agricultural colony:

1. With the decrease of the Jewish population in cities and towns there will be a decrease in competition among the city laborers, artisans and traders, and in that way one of the evils which causes anti-Semitic sentiments can be partly weakened or destroyed, which circumstances should not be ignored by Jews anywhere.
2. Disseminated among other classes and nationalities of the country, the Jews cease to be isolated, which isolation is one of the characteristic features considered by Christians to be condemned.

<sup>79</sup> "Guide to the Records of the Baron de Hirsch Fund," *Painted Woods and other Jewish farming settlement*, JewishGen.com, February 24, 2012.

<http://www.jewishgen.org/bessarabia/files/Emigration/PaintedWoods.pdf> accessed 2016.

<sup>80</sup> "Maurice baron de Hirsch," *Encyclopedia.com*. [www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Maurice\\_baron](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Maurice_baron) accessed July 2016.

<sup>81</sup> Janet E. Schulte, "Proving Up and Moving Up: Jewish Homesteading Activity in North Dakota 1900-1920." *Great Plains Quarterly* 10 (2010): 229-239, Pg. 231.

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3. The soil binds them firmly to the interests of the country and makes them good citizens, while city life demoralizes the masses unprepared to live and flourish, under free political institutions.

4. Thanks to the abnormal social and economic conditions, under which the Russian Jews are forced to live in cities and towns, they do become physically degraded and agricultural labor only can strengthen the physical [*sic!*] forces which factory work could thoroughly ruin.<sup>82</sup>

Baron de Hirsch's will specified that his fortune be used to aid Jewish immigrants escaping Russia with loans available to people who were willing to farm, amounting to \$1000 (\$26,320 today) per person or less with lenient terms of repayment. By 1930, ICA had distributed over 10,000 loans.<sup>83</sup>

The Industrial Removal Office (IRO) was formally created as part of the Jewish Agricultural Society in 1901 and funded by Baron de Hirsch. In this case his organization meant resettlement and sought to encourage these immigrants to leave the large population areas on the East coast and settle in the interior of the country. Settlement in places like North Dakota removed these immigrants from the crowded tenements of eastern New York City. It enabled the local Jewish organizations to obtain orders for workers and assist the immigrants on their arrival. In the first year of the IRO's existence, nearly 2000 individuals were sent to 250 places throughout the United States. The philosophy behind the IRO was to assimilate the immigrants into American Society, both economically and culturally. As David Bressler, IRO general manager for sixteen years noted, the goal was to allow immigrants to find "their own salvation." The IRO believed that individuals or families settling in their new lives would serve as magnets for immigrating relatives and friends. A major success of the IRO was to encourage a wide variety of occupations and trades including farmers.<sup>84</sup>

About the same time in 1901 Rabbi Levy of Chicago was starting the Jewish Agriculturists Aid Society in America. In a ten-year relationship with the Baron de Hirsch Fund, this organization served as a Midwestern base for the New York agencies. The organizations had the same goals:

1. Reduce the concentration of Jewish immigrants in urban ghettos by dispersing them throughout the country and
2. Remove a stereotype by proving the Jews were capable of physical productive labor, not merely commercial or financial dealings.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Ezekiel Lifschutz, "Jacob Gordin's Proposal to Establish an Agricultural Colony," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (December, 1966): 151-62, Pg. 159.

<sup>83</sup> "Jewish Colonization Association" (ICA), *Jewish Virtual Library*. [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org) accessed June 6, 2016.

<sup>84</sup> "Biographical Notes." *Industrial Removal Office*. <http://socialarchive.iath.virginia.edu/ark:/99166/w6q67qs2>.

<sup>85</sup> Schulte, Pg. 229.



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**During the year 1902, the following New Farm Loans have been made:**

*I—From J. A. & I. A. S. Funds.*

*New Farm Loans.*

STATE	Total Number Granted	Number Granted and Closed.	Number Granted but not Closed.	Amount Advanced.	Amount to be Advanced.	Total.
Alabama	1	1	..	\$250.00	.....	\$250.00
Connecticut	25	21	4	13,369.46	1,400.00	14,769.46
Illinois	3	3	..	1,250.00	.....	1,250.00
Indiana	2	2	..	1,400.00	.....	1,400.00
Massachusetts	2	1	1	1,200.00	275.00	1,475.00
Michigan	6	5	1	4,000.00	1,300.00	5,300.00
Missouri	1	..	1	.....	600.00	600.00
New Jersey	17	8	9	2,270.00	3,850.00	6,120.00
New York	11	8	3	3,025.00	1,400.00	4,425.00
North Dakota	9	6	3	3,200.00	1,800.00	5,000.00
Ohio	1	1	..	525.00	.....	525.00
Wisconsin	2	2	..	402.60	.....	402.60
	80	58	22	\$30,892.06	\$10,625.00	\$41,517.06

Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society's (J.A.& I.A.S.) Annual Farm Report 1902  
 Table of 12 state's new farm loans made during 1902 showing North Dakota had 4<sup>th</sup> largest number of loans

The Chicago Society (JAAS) subsidized the Jewish Chautauqua Society which sent reading materials in Hebrew, Yiddish and English on history and religion. It also sent "The Jewish Farmer," a Yiddish agricultural monthly newspaper, with the purpose of being an educational tool and a public forum. For over fifty years the magazine may have been the only Yiddish-language farm magazine in the world.

A table in the American Jewish Year Book of 1912-1913 shows the number of Jewish farming families with whom the JAIAS came in touch with and only representing about 75% of the actual number of Jewish farmers found in every part of the United States, with the most important settlements in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts in the East; Ohio and Michigan in the Middle West; and North Dakota in the Northwest with 231 families consisting of 1,155 estimated persons on 225 farms, with an estimated acreage of 86,018 and a land value of \$2,489,175. The estimated value of their equipment was \$460,350.<sup>86</sup>

Abraham Calof received loans from the JAAS whose branch office in Chicago directed all Midwest operations until 1947. It also provided settlement loans to his cousins, Maier Calof and John Calof in 1889. The Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America Report for the year 1908 provided the name and year of loans to farmers showing in 1913 Abraham, Charles, Moses

<sup>86</sup> Herbert Friedenwald, *The American Jewish Year Book 5673*, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America 1912, Pg. 77.

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and Solomon Calof also received monetary assistance. The surviving records of the JAIAS from the period of Calof family farming are not complete, but Abraham appears occasionally in records from the early 1900s. For example, in 1904 he received a five-hundred-dollar loan payable in five annual installments at six percent interest. The entry for this loan records the farm only had one other prior debt for nine hundred dollars with Charles Calof receiving a similar loan that year.<sup>87</sup> Additional small loans were granted until 1907 when Abraham was denied a request for two hundred dollars with the grounds for rejection being "Kalof [sic] could very well get along without further assistance from this Society."<sup>88</sup>

#### **D. United States Immigration Laws and Policies**

The large wave of 2 million immigrants between 1880 and the start of World War I in 1914, sparked by poverty, prejudice and persecution, came from primarily Eastern Europe and mostly clustered in New York. The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 established immigration restrictions on immigrants from Eastern European countries and the Immigration Act of 1924 made those restrictions worse. After World War I many countries closed their doors to immigration.<sup>89</sup>

The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 was enacted and signed into law on May 19, 1921. It's significance being the first federal law in U.S. history to actively and legally limit the immigration of Europeans. It reflected the growing American fear that people from southern and eastern European countries not only did not adapt well into American society, but also threatened its very existence. The law specified that no more than 3 percent of the total number of immigrants from any specific country already living in the United States in 1910 could migrate to America during any year. The bill was intended to be in effect for only a single year; however, it was not replaced until 1924.<sup>90</sup>

The 1924 Immigration Act signed by President Coolidge on May 26, 1924 made the restrictions worse. The 1924 Immigration Act set quotas that limited annual immigration from particular countries. The quota provided immigration visas to two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States as of the 1890 national census. The legislation identified who could enter as a "non-quota" immigrant. For "quota immigrants," preference was given to family members of U.S. citizens and to immigrants who were skilled in agriculture.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 130; Minutes, the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, March 2, 1904, p. 425. Archive Collections of the American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Mass.

<sup>88</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 130; Minutes, the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, October 30, 1907. Archive Collections of the American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Mass.

<sup>89</sup> "Immigration Act of 1921," *Anti-immigrant Movements and Policies*.

<http://immigrationtounitedstates.org/589-immigration-act-of-1921.html>

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> "Milestones: 1921–1936 The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)," *U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian*. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act> accessed 2016.

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## II. EXPERIENCES OF THE JEWISH HOMESTEADERS IN RAMSEY COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

### A. Background of Painted Woods

The Jewish homesteaders who lived and died in Ramsey County between 1882 and 1935 were among 1,000 Russian Jews who filed homestead claims in North and South Dakota, with 1910 the peak year for filings.<sup>92</sup> The “Hebrew Aid Society of St. Paul” with Rabbi Judah Wechsler as President, was founded in 1881 originally to assist, provide comfort and help, to thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe.<sup>93</sup> Rabbi Judah Wechsler led the Mount Zion Temple of St. Paul in sponsoring Jewish settlement in the Dakota Territories. The Mount Zion Hebrew Association members faced a new challenge when two hundred refugees from Russia arrived. In early July, another thirty-five came, followed by an additional two hundred on July 14. They had no food or money and little clothing. The Jews of St. Paul had little advance warning from the London agency that sent the refugees. Nevertheless, the Mount Zion congregants saw clearly their duty to aid their coreligionists. The members contributed what they could, but it was not enough. They then appealed to the city for help and received sufficient funds to assist the refugees. To meet the ongoing need, Rabbi Wechsler and congregation president Julius Austrian developed a plan to settle the refugees on farms in North Dakota. It would be an opportunity to break the Old-World pattern and have Jews become landowners and farmers. Additionally, it would get poor families out of unhealthy city conditions. In the spring of 1882 eleven families moved to the Painted Woods colony on the Missouri River south of Bismarck.<sup>94</sup> By 1884, the high point of the colony's population of 312 colonists, with 54 families each owning 160 acres, Nudelman Township was plotted. The township was named for Joseph Nudelman, who came on his own directly from the Odessa, Russia area following the pogroms in 1881 and 1882.<sup>95</sup>

The colony planned a major street named Wechsler and Montefiore School, the first schoolhouse erected on the hill one-mile north of the present-day town of Wilton. It was built of logs 16 by 20 feet and Miss Fanny Nudelman was its first teacher. Currently Montefiore School District has consolidated with several of the surrounding districts.<sup>96</sup> Unfortunately, the colonists, who were urban tradespeople, lacked agricultural experience, and despite Mount Zion members contributing almost \$35,000 to the project over five years, a series of calamities: crop failure in 1885, drought in 1886, and prairie fire, doomed the settlement and the residents all drifted away. Painted Woods had failed the test of communal effort. With his scheme a failure, Rabbi

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<sup>92</sup> Schulte, Pg. 238.

<sup>93</sup> W. Gunther Plaut, *The Jews in Minnesota: The First Seventy-Five Years*. New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1959, Pg. 105.

<sup>94</sup> “Historical Tidbits-Mount Zion in the 1880s,” *Mount Zion Temple*. [www.mzion.org](http://www.mzion.org) accessed July 2016.

<sup>95</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 130.

<sup>96</sup> “City of Wilton North Dakota,” Education-City of Wilton. [www.wiltonnd.org](http://www.wiltonnd.org) accessed June 4 2016.



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Wechsler resigned. Though the attempts to help Jewish immigrants establish farm colonies failed, Rabbi Wechsler was still considered an innovator and modernizer.<sup>97</sup>

### **B. The Garske Colony**

Between 1880 and 1940, approximately 8000 Jews took part in farming and homesteading in the rural Midwest. In Ramsey County, North Dakota, over ninety homestead claims were filed by members of Jewish farm families with some families able to file more than one claim. The initial group of twenty-two Russian Jews who arrived in the Garske<sup>98</sup> area in 1882-1883 came through the sponsorship of the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society. The HEAS was a charitable organization founded in New York City on November 27, 1881, and operated until 1884.<sup>99</sup>

The Jewish immigrants came to the Garske Colony via diverse paths. A few immigrated individually, such as did Simon Ettinger, who located there in 1886, a few years after the Kaufman's and Kohn. The Kaufman's, Kohn, Ettinger's and Greenberg's had all first immigrated to Chicago before deciding to be part of America's opportunity of obtaining free land in the Dakota Territory offered by the Homestead Act. Abraham and Benny Greenberg, already living in cities in America and earning their living by peddling, learned from formal announcements of the establishment of the settlement that appeared in the Jewish-American press. Information on the community was spread to nearby towns via the informal news service of peddlers and other itinerant salesman. The Goldberg's became Garske Colony residents in 1886. Through their encouragement, additional family members homesteaded at the Garske Colony. Other Jewish immigrants arrived at the Garske Colony after participating in the short-lived rural colonization efforts of Painted Woods and formed part of a rural Jewish enclave in the area. This increased the number of Jewish farm families between 1886 and 1894 from around ten to more than forty.

The Jewish agricultural settlement efforts typically refer to the entire group as the Devils Lake settlement after the name of the nearest major town. Other accounts refer to the Jewish rural communities as the Garske Colony, Starkweather, Iola and Chananel settlements. The earliest effort centered six miles east of the village of Garske, 15 miles north of Devils Lake. The second attempt was located about five miles further north and closest to the town of Starkweather. The term *colony* referred to a "series of Jewish farmsteads interspersed with gentile farms."<sup>100</sup> Not all Jews settled in colonies, but took up land as individuals or in small groups and clusters elsewhere in the state. In the colony, each family occupied its own claim of land, usually a quarter section of 160 acres, often a mile or more from the nearest neighbor. Pioneers from Iola included Michael Fishman, Nathan Greenberg, J. Aronovitch, Moses Goldstein, Joseph Horwitz, David

<sup>97</sup> "Portrait of Rabbi Judah Wechsler," Minnesota Reflections. <http://reflections.mndigital.org> accessed June 4, 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Williams, Pg. 237. Garske was the settlement on Sec. 5, Webster Twp. and named for the pioneer families of Herman Charles, Louis and Gust Garske, who settled here in 1883. Charles and Louis were the townsite owners. The post office was established December 28, 1900 with Charles Garske, postmaster.

<sup>99</sup> "Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society," *Jewish Virtual Library*. [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org) accessed June 6, 2016.

<sup>100</sup> Sherman, *Plains Folk North Dakota's Ethnic History*, Pg. 390.

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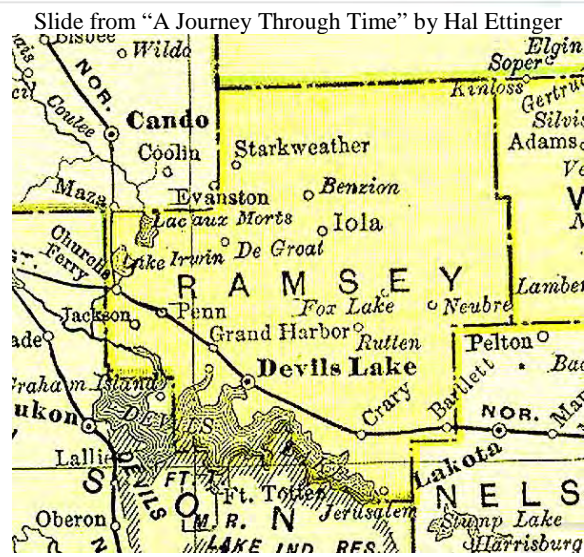
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Horwitz, Pincus Schreierman, Max Rabinovich, S. Linetzky, Nathan Frankel, Sam Levy, Moshe Sprung and others.<sup>101</sup>

## Garske Colony and Sons of Jacob cemetery

picture from: Why North Dakota, A Personal History of My Family by Dianne Siegel



Jewish rural communities near Devils Lake known as the Garske Colony: Starkweather, Iola, Channele and Benzion settlements (source [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com))

<sup>101</sup> William C. Sherman, *Prairie Mosaic: An Ethnic Atlas of Rural North Dakota*. Fargo, North Dakota: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies. 1983 Pg. 112. The spelling may differ from other sources.

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News of the Garske Colony was reported in the Saint Paul Globe, July 20, 1882, stating there was a post office that bore the proud name of New Jerusalem, and conditions for settlement appeared promising. However, in December it was reported by the Bismarck Tribune: "There are 22 Russian Jews in Devils Lake country, whose situation in view of the cold winter is extremely perilous. They live in poor mud houses 16 miles from timber and are inexperienced, thoughtless and extremely poor."<sup>102</sup>

No records for the settlers have been found for the next few years resulting in little being known about the fates of most original members of the Garske group. Some of the settlers of this colony moved away but those who remained were joined by the hardest settlers from the abandoned colony of Painted Woods bringing hardly enough to begin once more. The settlers were also joined by other immigrant newcomers who brought some funds of their own having lived the last few years in the city, probably St. Paul or Minneapolis, and had dreams of owning their own land.<sup>103</sup>

The following is a list of the names of settlers who came in 1887 and 1888 provided by Marvin S. Kirk's *A Study of the Jew's Contribution to Land Settlement and Land Credit*: Jake Freedman, Benny Greenberg, Jake Olswing, Gilman, Charles Colloff, Myer Colloff, Eidelman, Grassman, E. Minger, Max Koehn, Simon Clitchen, Schemson, "Old Man" Muhl, John Colloff, Slummerson, Aaron Freedman, Phillip Greenberg, Peter Olswing, Max Muhl, Moses Colloff, Isaac Superior, Simon Clitchen, Schemson, "Old Man" Muhl, John Colloff, Slummerson, Walk.<sup>104</sup>

The 1887-1888 arrivals' living conditions seemed to be somewhat improved. The dugouts, mud houses, sod huts and shanties grew into more comfortable dwellings for the settlers who persevered.<sup>105</sup> Unfortunately, the settlement experienced severe weather. A hot, dry summer resulted in their first crop at the Garske Colony as poor and was followed by an extremely harsh winter. To survive the settlers needed outside help which came from their Gentile neighbors who collected some funds for them and purchased train tickets for two of the leaders to go to St. Paul to request additional aid. (Continued in Settlement Farming Assistance and Loans Section) By 1900 more than one half of the original settlers had already departed the colony to settle in Grand Forks, Fargo, Minneapolis and St. Paul. It was reported in the 1903 Annual Report of the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Society that of the eight families sent by them from New York to North Dakota, seven had abandoned their claims.<sup>106</sup> Some of the Grand Forks Jewish pioneers who originated from the Garske Colony were Michael Fishman and Nathan Greenberg. These men were among the leading personalities of the Grand Forks Jewish community aiding new immigrants on their way to a new life and were also strong, enthusiastic supporters of Rabbi Papermaster. These members helped form the Jewish community of Grand Forks beginning in

<sup>102</sup>Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 67.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 226. The spelling may differ from other sources.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, Pg. 230.

<sup>106</sup> "Annual Report, 1903." *The Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society*. Published by Harvard College Library, October 7, 1913, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Pg. 34.



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the late 1880s along with others who migrated directly from Eastern Europe and contributed to the Jewish community's steady growth through the turn of the century.<sup>107</sup>

Other early settlers who suffered through two years of harsh winters and poor crops before leaving for larger cities or to join the railroad construction crews working eastwards toward Grand Forks, which was to be the end of the line, were: J. Aronovitch, Moses Goldstein, Joseph Horwitz, Pincus Schreierman, S. Linetzky and Nathan Frankel (married men with families), and single men, Sam Levy and Moshe Sprung.<sup>108</sup> The JAIAS reported in 1903 that for those families that passed through a winter in North Dakota successfully, it was only because they did so with considerable and continued assistance. The reasons for the failures were stated as follows:

1. Practically total failure of crops, and the information imparted to these people by neighbors that the crops for the previous year had not been much better.
2. Severe climate and lonesomeness, owing to the great distance from railroad stations and settlements.
3. Poor living accommodations, caused by extremely high cost of lumber, water wells, stock, implements and necessaries of life.
4. The lack of credit at the stores, owing to the fact that their chattels were mortgaged to this Society, and their knowledge that they could not obtain from this Society enough money to carry them until the time of another uncertain crop, without depending on their own efforts, which would have meant hard physical labor in hiring themselves out to others.<sup>109</sup>



Sod house near Temvik about 1905 (source 10743 Lars Soiseth Collection, #A3855, SHSND)

<sup>107</sup> Sherman, *Prairie Mosaic: An Ethnic Atlas of Rural North Dakota*, Pg. 112.

<sup>108</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 225.

<sup>109</sup> "Annual Report, 1903," Pg. 34-35.

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JAIAS also stated these North Dakota Government Homestead enterprises can only be successful if, in addition to a capital of at least from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred (and more if the families have no working members in addition to the father), the settlers are endowed with physical, mental and moral qualifications of such a high order as they can only in rare cases be expected to possess. This work should only be undertaken with strong families who are tried and acclimated.”<sup>110</sup> Among the remaining were two Greenberg families, two Miel (Mill) families, one Kronick family (and others whose names are not remembered). Many of these early pioneers acquired considerable land and, with the growth of the country, became well-to-do. Most of them, however, sold their land at a profit and became engaged in various kinds of business in the neighborhood.<sup>111</sup> Following are some of the Jewish individuals of the Garske Colony, each with their own story.

### C. History and Stories of Garske Colony Immigrants

#### **1. Herman Kaufman Family and Morris Kohn**

In 1881 brothers, Morris and Samuel Kohn, immigrated from the manicured fields of Erdo Benye, Hungary’s Tokaj wine district. Tokaj is the oldest wine region in the world and they had enjoyed modest prosperity as wine-growers and wine-makers until the American plague phylloxera began to destroy their vineyards.



King of France, Louis XIV, (1643-1715) was known as the ‘King of Wine’ and served the ‘Wine of Kings’ from the Tokaj region (King Louis XIV image from Wikipedia.org; Map source [devinehungarianwinewordpress.com](http://devinehungarianwinewordpress.com))

Before this event, letters from emigrant relatives had told of the opportunities in America and excited their imaginations. With less than \$10 between them, the Kohn brothers arrived in Chicago and began work in a cloak factory. With the motto "All for one and one for all," which was an integral part of Jewish nature, they soon sent for the entire family which included vineyard owner, Herman Kaufman, and his wife, Esther (sister of Morris and Samuel Kohn), and

<sup>110</sup> "Annual Report, 1903," Pg. 34-35.

<sup>111</sup> Friedenwald, Pg. 93.

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two young daughters, Ninna and Lottie. Morris Kohn, after acquiring some English skills through night classes, figured out a poster advertising the free lands in northern Dakota Territory. Consequently, the Kohn's and Kaufman's soon became an enthusiastic party of the land boom stimulated by the railroad. Brothers-in-law Herman Kaufman and Morris Kohn were Jewish peasant immigrants who had retained the peasant hunger for land and arrived as some of the first Jewish homesteaders to the area in 1884. The offer of the free land would amount to a ranch of six hundred and forty acres with all the Kaufman's homesteads; in Hungarian terms that equated the acreage of a great lord.<sup>112</sup>

After their arrival by train in a boxcar on the newly completed Great Northern Railroad to the frontier town of Devils Lake, a settler escorted Kaufman and Kohn north of town about 20 miles. When Morris Kohn's horse's hoofs threw up black richness he announced, "Here we stay!" and they put out the government markers that designated the first of their four quarter-sections.<sup>113</sup> This land was referred to as "No Man's Land" because of its treeless, rough prairie amid the Dakota drift prairie. It was a place not much settled, and consisted of rich black loam silt with a mixture of sand to make it warm and a subsoil of clay that held moisture. The unrecognized fertile soil lay hidden beneath the prairie grasses. This was the beginning of North Dakota's second Jewish homestead colony with eventually ninety Jewish men and women filing claims on Ramsey County land.<sup>114</sup>

The first summer's wheat harvest was destroyed by an early August frost. Having debts with interest, Morris found extra work as a carpenter near Cando, North Dakota during the winter, earning \$30.00 a month plus board. Morris also supplemented the family income by trading furs with the Indians who were back and forth down the trails allowing him a modest profit to purchase ploughs, harrows, tools and domestic supplies. The following spring Morris and Kaufman harvested part of a crop and the profit carrying them through the winter, but they were not able to gain on the debt. Realizing a long struggle, Morris Kohn retired from farming and returned to Chicago to work in the factory where his boss paid his Dakota Territory debts for a third of Kohn's wages. Morris entered the fur business as his early trading with the Sioux and Turtle Mountain Indians gave him training for assessing the quality of furs and pelts. Ten years later he became a highly successful broker in raw furs dealing in Chicago, New York, St. Louis, the Northwest and even London. This business led him to Adolph Zukor, the Penny Arcade and in the future, the moving picture.<sup>115</sup>

The Kaufman's spent six years of rough pioneering in Dakota before taking under consideration their girls were riding ten miles to school all winter on their bronco, rough characters as horse rustlers were haunting those frontier roads and the Indians were growing sullen finding their hunting grounds invaded and ruined. By then they had buried their toddler son, Joseph, on the prairie, but had two other sons, John and Albert, and three beautiful girls, Ninna, Lottie and Julie, being born in the sod house. Concerned over what their girls would someday marry into, farm

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<sup>112</sup> Irwin, Pg. 54-56.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, Pg. 57-58.

<sup>114</sup> Garske Colony (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

<sup>115</sup> Irwin, Pg. 69-71.



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drudgery, they decided to move back to Chicago in 1890 where Herman reentered the clothing business. Their family would add another daughter, Francis, born in Chicago. Herman Kaufman died suddenly in Chicago at the age of 47 in 1903.<sup>116</sup>

## 2. Immigrant Chaim Wilensky

The first pogrom, which started the terrible series of massacres of Jews that swept over the Pale of Settlement, occurred in 1881 at Elizabethgrad, Russia, home to the Wilensky family. A drought in 1892 and poor farming methods which never allowed the soil to recover, prompted a large famine that plagued the region. As reported in a 1901 *New York Times* article, the Ministry of the Interior denied that the persistence of famine in the region and blocked non-State charities from bringing aid to the area. An immense number of East European Jewish immigrants arrived in America between 1881 and 1914. In 1906 alone, poor and with little or nothing but the clothes on their backs, 153,748 immigrants arrived.<sup>117</sup>

Chaim (Herman) Wilensky was one of those who emigrated due to these factors. His ship docked at the Port of New York in 1900. He was a 16-year-old immigrant who arrived from the port of Leningrad with \$5.00 and became involved with the Garske Colony members. He most likely experienced New York City's Lower East Side where Russian immigrant families overflowed in tenements and struggled to make ends meet laboring long hours in sweatshops for minimal wages in poor, unacceptable working conditions.

Transitioning into a new culture, cut off from loved ones left behind, and in some cases forced to break religious customs and rituals once held dear, immigrants frequently spent lifetimes trying to reconcile what they had left behind with new freedoms and opportunity. The greatest test for adhering to Judaism for the clear majority of these new arrivals may have been the issue of the Sabbath. America's work week in the late 18th and early 19th centuries consisted of six days with Sunday as the day of rest. In this situation, taking Saturday off for Sabbath observance was simply not an option if you did not want to be immediately fired since finding new employment was not so easy. Wilensky first worked as an apprentice in the sweatshops and may have experienced the Sabbath dilemma.

Many people working in the sweatshops contracted consumption (tuberculosis), and since he was afraid of coming down with the disease he took advantage of the opportunity to move west, relocating to North Dakota in 1905. His two brothers, Joe and Isadore, who had arrived in America in 1889, joined him a few years later, but did not stay.

Chaim filed his naturalization papers on December 3, 1909. His first job was selling suits, taking the measurements and sending all the information to New York where the suits were made, but he did not make a good living at it so he went to work on the Davis Rubin Jewish homestead farm helping with harvesting. This is where he met his future Jewish wife, Ida Rubin. About

<sup>116</sup> Irwin, Pg. 68, 114.

<sup>117</sup> "Timeline in American Jewish History," *The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives*.  
<http://americanjewisharchives.org/education/timeline.php#1800> accessed 2016.

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1910 he became a tailor and continued this work until very late in life even while living in a nursing home. At his tailor Emporium in Devils Lake, Ida and her sister, Dora, had a millinery shop at the front of the store, which expanded to ladies' apparel. It is written Wilensky was not interested in *keeping kosher* (foods that conform to the regulations of Jewish dietary law) and was known to sneak out to eat and return home with a toothpick in his mouth, even on *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement, one of the most important Jewish holidays and one of two High Holidays observed with fasting and prayer) when everyone else was fasting. However, he became more interested in Judaism towards the end of his life attending services regularly at the synagogue in Minneapolis where they had moved in 1930.<sup>118</sup>

### 3. Immigrant Louis Kahan

Living in Poland, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kahan were attracted to the opportunities to own land in the United States. Louis came to this country and worked on the railroad as a section hand as the railroad moved west. When he had saved enough money to bring his wife to this country, he boarded the train for St. Paul and was robbed by the conductor and brakeman on the train who threw him from the moving train after removing his shoes. Landing in a snow bank, he was not seriously injured and after discovering one of his shoes, made his way to a farm house where he recovered from frost bite. Kahan was tempted to return to Poland, but his wife wrote him a letter saying she would borrow money from an uncle and join him in America. With her arrival in St. Paul the couple joined a colony of Jewish immigrants and moved to the area east of Garske (becoming one of the 104 original members of Garske Colony homesteaders). After weathering crop failures, fires, and winter hardship, the colony finally had a bumper crop of grain and hay. One day while Mr. Kahan was after a load of wood with an ox drawn wagon, thieves came to the farm and hauled away most of the grain despite the attempts of Mrs. Kahan to drive them away with a pitchfork. So great was their despair that they signed over their land and left for Seattle where they made their future home.<sup>119</sup>

### 4. Simon Ettinger Immigrant Family

Simon and Sophia Ettinger departed their home near Odessa, a part of Russia that abounded with wheat fields, with their three children in 1881. Their fourth child was born on the boat in American waters and became the first United States citizen of the Ettinger family. After passing through Chicago, the family first resided in a Jewish neighborhood with other Russian immigrants in St. Paul with Simon peddling as an occupation.<sup>120</sup> They had grown up in a semi-

<sup>118</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin Families.

<sup>119</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, *Garske Colony & Sons of Jacob Cemetery in North Dakota*. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org). Story told by son, Dr. O.E. Kahan, a retired Seattle dentist who visited Devils Lake in 1958.

<sup>120</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 2005, Pg 36. Peddling was not unusual for the first Jewish settlers who arrived in America's cities to start out as peddlers in the countryside for in the middle decades of the nineteenth century peddling was a common occupation for Jews newly arrived in America searching for a way to establish themselves financially. Peddling was an attractive option for it did not require much training nor much command of the English language, and because they could usually find an established merchant, often a fellow Jew or even a relative, who would provide capital or the goods needed to make a start. Moreover, there was a great need for peddlers among the scattered farmsteads and villages in the American country-side.

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rural area in Russia and land ownership appealed to them. It denoted freedom and a more ennobling life. Accepting the opportunity provided by the Homestead Act, in the fall of 1886 Simon filed a claim on a homestead in Dakota Territory, and by March of 1887 the family had moved into a house built on the land. On April 7, 1887, he filed for an additional lot on a section of land adjacent to his original tract. Simon described the land in his 1888 proof of claim as 40 acres of "clear prairie farming land," valuable for farming, but not for timber or mining and it was not used for grazing. He valued his 12' x 16' house made of lumber with a shingle roof at \$75 dollars. It had a window, door and a floor (as opposed to dirt). He and his wife lived in this home with seven of their children. Simon valued the land and house together at \$275. He had a stable and a well on his adjoining "pre-emption" land. Without a well the sloughs and coulees were the only other source of water for the livestock and most likely for the family's personal use requiring the need to take care to avoid contaminated water for their health concerns. A prairie fire was a very serious threat to the pioneers, and a near water source would be advantageous.<sup>121</sup>

He also listed his property as the following tools:

- one plow
- two wagons
- a mower
- a rake
- a seeder
- a binder and
- two "drags"

His livestock listed:

- four horses
- two mules
- five cows
- two calves
- some hens, turkeys, ducks and geese

And he had furniture:

- a stove
- a table
- a bed
- dishes and chairs

In Simon's first year of farming, 1888, he planted 12 acres of wheat which froze out. Undaunted, he planned for next season. However, 1889 was a year of misfortune with a storm causing the early death of Simon just six months after gaining free title to 160 acres. Before Simon died, he transferred the homestead property over to his wife for \$2,000 on a deed dated May 6, 1889. It is not known why he did that, but it likely had to do with obtaining a mortgage loan for the \$2,000. His widow, Sophia, along with the five children who were still at home, then returned to Chicago. In 1894 she sold the property to Charles Budde of Devils Lake. The nominal sales price

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<sup>121</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Simon and Sophia Ettinger.



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was \$10, but Mr. Budde took the property subject to both a mortgage and some tax liens. Sophie could not support her family and in 1894 the younger ones were sent to an orphanage, the Jewish Children's Home in Cleveland, Ohio until they were confirmed at age 14 and sent home. Sophie died in 1920. Some of the children resented their time in the orphanage, but for daughter Anna, it provided an education of poetry, art and Hebrew that she appreciated throughout her life.<sup>122</sup>

### 5. Phillip Greenberg Immigrant Family

Phillip and Mollie Greenberg were married in Chicago, Illinois in 1880. The marriage may have been arranged on the immigration ship to America. They moved to Petowsky, Michigan where they traveled door to door in a horse and buggy as a "Customer Peddler." It is thought they made the decision to homestead in Dakota Territory after receiving a letter from Benny Greenberg (already situated in Sullivan Township Ramsey County Section 5 and 33). While some of the Garske settlers arrived in groups, the Greenberg's arrived independently.<sup>123</sup>

The Greenberg's traveled by train in 1887 to join family members in Ramsey County Dakota Territory where they homesteaded on 160 acres of land in Section 34 of Sullivan Township. By 1909 their land ownership was increased to include portions of Section 35, which they farmed for about 21 years. The Greenberg's maintained an Orthodox Kosher home with Mr. Greenberg owning a Torah scroll said to have been given to his family by Moses Montefiore. Holiday services, often led by Benny Greenberg, were held at their house, being one of the largest homes, with all the Jewish community in the area participating. For months at a time a rabbi lived with them and taught Hebrew to the older brothers and sisters (The Greenberg's had 11 children altogether.) The boys were *bar mitzvah* (a Jewish boy who reaches his 13th birthday and attains the age of religious duty and responsibility) at the proper time and age. The Rabbi Papermaster was the *Shochet* (the authorized slaughterer of animals according to kosher requirements) and *Mohel* (a religious technician who circumcises a male child eight days after birth). The only time the family could eat meat in the summer was if the Shochet happened to come the area for an occasion and slaughtered meat at their farm.

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Grawoig Families.

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Rabbi Papermaster  
(Photo source Kevarim.com)



Phillip and Mollie (Grawoig) Greenberg  
(Photo source Geni.com)



Louis and Chaim Grawoig  
(Photo source Geni.com)

Mrs. Mollie Greenberg was from near Berditchev, Russia, 90 miles southwest of Kiev. Her parents, Louis and Chaim Grawoig, made their living as drovers, hauling goods for people with their horses hitched to a wagon. They had four children, son Chaim, and daughters Mollie, Ascher and Rivka. The family history notes that Chaim had been called up for conscription to the military in 1885 and immediately set sail for America. He would later send for his pregnant wife, Sarah, and children. He most likely first joined his family in Chicago and eventually they may all have ended up in the Devils Lake, ND area. Sarah arrived with three of the four children because she left the youngest child, Annie, in Russia with her wet nurse since babies nursed until they could eat solid food, but planned for the next young woman from the community to bring her. Droughts in the summer and early cold winters made farming near impossible. The thought of survival during the difficult winter dominated their lives with all work completed during the other seasons directed towards lasting through the winter. The locations of the farms 5-6 miles apart isolated them, but they helped each other as best they could. Family histories tell of bodies found along the trails after the snow melt in the spring and that Sarah told Chaim Devils Lake was "no place to raise a Jewish family," and they moved back to Chicago.<sup>124</sup> Mollie homesteaded in Sullivan Township NE 1/4 Section 33 as shown in the Standard Atlas Ramsey County North Dakota in 1909. The Greenberg's were neighbors to Nik Kitsch whose homestead was in the NW 1/4 Section 33. In addition to Mollie's farm and home chores, she took produce into town to sell, hitching up the 6-horse wagon and leaving her oldest daughter in charge of the children and home. When the family moved into Devils Lake, Mollie had a general store. They moved to St. Paul where Phillip started a bakery, then a laundry when the children became of marriageable age because the parents were worried the children would marry non-Jews. The family was known to prosper. Phillip Greenberg died August 8, 1931 in St. Paul.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Grawoig Families.

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**6. Abraham Adelman Immigrant Family**

Abraham Adelman, born in Kief, Russia November 15, 1845, immigrated to America in 1880 because of economic reasons. He wanted a better life for himself and his family and was following the general stream of immigration at the time as stated by his son Isaac. Isaac explained, "the married man would start out first and later when they had established themselves then their families would join them." Abraham Adelman, after emigrating, took odd jobs in New York City until 1884 when he became interested in what the Homestead Act offered. He and Razel (the Hebrew form of Rose) Adelman were the parents of Isaac,<sup>126</sup> Joseph and Herman Adelman who possibly all lived on Isaac's land, Sections 21 and 29, shown with three residences on the Overland Township Plat Map of 1909.



Abraham Adelman and his wife, Rosa (photo courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

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<sup>126</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Edelman.



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Isaac (Ike) Adelman was born in New York in 1883, but did not arrive in North Dakota until 1890 where he worked with his father on the farm until 1905, doing quite well. When Abraham Adelman retired, due to his age, Isaac moved off the farm to Hansboro, ND<sup>127</sup> where he engaged in the hotel business. On November 12, 1907, it is recorded Isaac Adelman had a sale in Overland Township.<sup>128</sup>

Isaac moved to Devils Lake where he oversaw the Sevilla Hotel, advertised as the only first class hotel in Devils Lake, then the Webster Hotel which was built in 1902 by William Higgins. Isaac married Esther Greenberg in 1924. In 1926 he entered the new industry of the automobile business. In 1933 he was owner of a grocery business at 701 2nd St Devils Lake. In writing his memories he expressed his belief, "...that North Dakota offered as good and as many opportunities as any other place, and we have a healthy climate here, also good people around us. What more can we ask?"<sup>129</sup>

As reported by Isaac Adelman, the original Garske Colony of 50 Jewish homesteaders that arrived in the early 1880s from New York received monetary assistance and of locating suitable land. Between 1886 and 1894 there was an increase in the number of Jewish farm families from approximately ten to more than forty. The dry years of 1895-1897 caused extreme hardship and along with the challenges to observing traditional Jewish culture, the homesteaders did not adapt to the environmental and geographic conditions of the prairie and many left. The record shows that in the period between 1898 and 1907, the number of Jewish families decreased from thirty to twenty. Adelman gave the names of the farmers who remained as: Phillip Greenberg, Benny Greenberg, Abrham Hoohner, Mendal Miel, Joseph Miel, Benjamin Schlamerson, Sam Goldberg, I. Goldberg, Joe Goldberg, Alex Canter, Abraham Callof, Charles Callof, Benjamin Callof, Luie Callof, Meir Callof, Moses Callof, Jakob Borkoeitt, Abraham Edelman, Isak Edelman, Joseph Edelman, Herman Edelman and B. Goodman.<sup>130</sup>

Isaac Adelman recorded in later years the few remaining on the homesteads were the following: Luie Friedman, Mari Adelman (Joseph's wife), Ruth and Annie Adelman (daughters of Joseph Adelman), Joseph Miel, Isaac Adelman, Luie Gutterman and A.B. Canter.<sup>131</sup>

Joseph Adelman was born in Russia. He came to the United States in 1888 and appeared on the 1900 census of Overland Township. His home is listed in the 1909 Ramsey County Standard Atlas in Overland Township Section 29, and as having been a resident in the county since 1897. Molly Sylvia Mills, a beautiful Chicago girl, was also Russian born. Joseph and Molly fell in love when Molly visited her family on the Ramsey County farm. In spite of her parents' opposition, Joseph and Molly married and became the parents of six children. The third child, a baby girl, died at the age of six weeks old. Joseph's health too became progressively worse with illness and kidney problems causing them to give up the rigors of the farm and move into Devils

<sup>127</sup> Williams, Pg. 313. Hansboro derived its name from U.S. Sen. H. C. Hansbrough of Devils Lake, North Dakota.

<sup>128</sup> Melland, Pg. 420.

<sup>129</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Grawoig Families.

<sup>130</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Adelman.

<sup>131</sup> *Ramsey County Standard Atlas*, 1909, Pg. 75. There is a variation found in the spelling of first and last names as Isaac/Isak Adelman/Edelman.

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Lake and Starkweather where he found work. Joseph died at the age of 35, circa 1918, leaving Molly to raise her five young children in Devils Lake.<sup>132</sup>

Herman Adelman was born in 1882. He married Dora Rubin, who was born in 1881, on December 21, 1903 and they had five children. They later moved to Winnipeg.

Abraham Adelman along with Davis Rubin and Mandel Mills were the religious leaders of the Jewish community. They led religious services and maintained the Jewish religious life in Devils Lake.<sup>133</sup> The Rubin and Adelman families were joined when Dora Rubin married Herman Adelman. When Joseph Adelman married Molly Mills in 1907, all three families of the religious triumvirate leaders were connected.<sup>134</sup>

### **7. Solomon Kalov (Calof) Immigrant Family**

The procedure by the Jewish Agricultural Aid Society (JAAS) of placing immigrants near one another and sending them in family groups is demonstrated by the Adelman and Calof family members. The JAAS recognized two important issues involved in creating Jewish farming communities on the prairie. First, sending families together or sending additional family members in subsequent years meant more local assistance for the difficult tasks of homesteading was available. Second, the Chicago agency had some understanding of the need of Jews to live relatively near one another to establish a community that could meet their social and cultural needs. A critical mass of settlers from any ethnic group is required to sustain ethno cultural forms over time, but the religious requirements of traditional Judaism made this a particularly serious issue for Jewish homesteaders. An example being meeting the requirements of a *minyan*, a minimum of 10 adult Jews<sup>135</sup> (an adult Jew is any Jewish male who has passed his 13th birthday).

Solomon Kalov was born January 2, 1825 in the Village of Stebliv, Cherkas'ka, Ukraine to parents Salvol and Libba Kalov. He married Yecheved "Charadh" Myers who was born in the Ukraine June 14, 1832 and died November 4, 1927 in Ramsey County, Minnesota. They were the parents of three sons, Abraham, Charles (Savol) and Moses and two daughters, Elka, "Ita", and Chaya "Ida" born December 1877. Solomon emigrated to America in 1894 to join his sons Abraham and Charlie already in America, near Devils Lake, North Dakota. Solomon died March 1, 1909 and was interred in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. Yecheved "Charadh" continued to make her home with her children and moved with them to St. Paul, living to be 91 years old.<sup>136</sup>

Charles (Savol) Calof, son of Solomon and Yecheved "Charadh" (Myers) Kalov was born in June of 1864 and was married to Faga, who was born in Russia in January 1863. Charles and Faga were married in 1886 in Russia. She and the two oldest children, Oscar and Henry, came to America with Charles' parents in 1894. Three more children were born while they lived in North Dakota in the west 1/2 of Section 29 in Overland Township near his brother, Abraham, and

<sup>132</sup> Melland, Pg. 442; Rose Sweed, "Israel's Castle," Daisy Hermanson Library, Lake Region Heritage Center, Devils Lake, North Dakota, 1977. Rose is the daughter of Mandel Mill., Pg. 17-19.

<sup>133</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Edelman.

<sup>134</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin families.

<sup>135</sup> Schulte, Pg. 232.

<sup>136</sup> Solomon Kalov, <http://www.findagrave.com> accessed June 2016.

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family. Charles' family left their farm in 1917 for St. Paul along with the other members of the extended family who moved off their homesteads.<sup>137</sup>



Charles (Savol) Calof (source findagrave.com)



Rachel Calof, Yecheved Kalov and Abraham Calof  
(source findagrave.com)

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<sup>137</sup> Melland, Pg. 423.



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L. to R.: Charles (Savol) and Fannie (Goldenberg) Kalov, Minnie Calof-Rubin, young girl is Sylvia Rubin (Minnie's daughter), Rachel Bella Kahn-Calof, wife of Abraham Calof, Photo courtesy of Arnold Liebman family, circa 1930

Elka "Ita" Kalov died in the Ukraine and her orphaned daughters lived with their grandparents. Two of Elka's daughters, Sarah and Doba, immigrated to the US with their Uncle Abraham Calof in 1891. Her other two daughters, Zelda and Dora, came to the US in 1894 with their grandparents Solomon and Charadh Kalov. Elka's (Ita) husband was Solomon Zaslofsky, who fathered a fifth daughter, Teibe (Tillie). Solomon and Teibe eventually immigrated to Canada in approximately 1906 and settled in Winnipeg. The fate of his second wife is unknown.<sup>138</sup>

Moses, the youngest son of Solomon and Yecheved "Charadh" Kalov (Calof), was born September 1878 and married Chaya "Ida" Pyes, also a Russian immigrant in the Garske Colony, where they lived in utter poverty. They had two daughters, Sadie and Marion, and a son named Samuel. Chaya "Ida" Kalov, also known as Hudel, remarried Benjamin Gudnick after the death of Moses. Cause of Moses' death is unknown, one could guess perhaps an accident or the great flu outbreak that occurred during World War 1. Benjamin died in 1949 in Winnipeg and Chaya "Ida" died in Los Angeles, CA in 1952.<sup>139</sup>

Abraham Calof was born July 16, 1872 to Solomon and Yecheved "Charadh" Kalov in Russia. He arrived in America via Ellis Island in July 1891. The family was lured to the Dakota prairie

<sup>138</sup> Elka Kalov Zaslofsky [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) accessed June 2016.

<sup>139</sup> Moses "Moe" Kalov. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) accessed June 2016.

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by the promise of free land with their destination a Jewish settlement northeast of Devils Lake, North Dakota. Brothers, Abraham and Charlie, and their nieces, Sarah and Doba, traveled together from New York to Devils Lake, Ramsey County North Dakota to meet with their prospective husbands. The arranged marriages to their cousins, John (Leib) and Maier (Isaac) Calof, the first member of the Calof family to arrive in Ramsey County, had been orchestrated by an uncle in Steblev. Abraham filed his first papers to become a U.S. citizen on July 13, 1891 in Devils Lake, North Dakota.<sup>140</sup> Abraham Calof is listed in the 1909 Standard Atlas Ramsey County North Dakota as a farmer in Sections 29, 30 and 32 in Overland Township and a resident of Ramsey County since 1891.<sup>141</sup> He also co-owned some land in partnership with his brother, Charlie, which included 120 acres of school section land they sold in 1910.

Rachel Bella Kahn was born March of 1876 in Bila Tserkva Kyyivs'ka, Ukraine. She was the second oldest of four children. Her mother died when she was four years old. Her father remarried, but her second mother was unkind, so Rachel left home as soon as she could and worked for her father's sister. Again, life was hard for Rachel and a marriage arranged by Chaya "Ida" to her brother, Abraham Calof, who was already in America, as a 'picture bride' seemed the answer to her troubles. At age 18, Rachel emigrated from Bila Tserkva, Kyivs'ka oblast, Ukraine via Hamburg, Germany to New York. She traveled under the name Ruchel Chiefetz (Rachel Chavetz). Rachel arrived in America on June 9th, 1894 aboard the SS Scandia after a 22-day voyage and was processed at Ellis Island, where she was met by her fiancé, Abraham.<sup>142</sup> Research to date suggests that in 1891-1894 Charles Calof remained in Ramsey County to farm, but Abraham returned to New York, where he is believed to have worked as a lithographer for the next three years while waiting for his bride.<sup>143</sup>

Rachel and Abraham remained in New York for a few weeks while Abraham worked to pay for the 4-day train ride to Devils Lake, North Dakota where Abraham intended to farm and acquire land in Overland Township (Ramsey County) under the Homestead Act. After a long journey to Overland Township, Rachel finally arrived to her new home. Abraham and Rachel were married November 18, 1894. The newlyweds were forced to spend the winter in a 12' x 14' homestead shack with the elder Calof's, Abraham's brother, 24 chickens, and one calf. They were so poor they could only afford to heat one shack and as yet there were no outbuildings for the animals. The circumstances caused Abraham to work for extra wages on nearby farms seven days a week and violate the Sabbath.<sup>144</sup> Rachel Bella Calof stated "personally the most dependable state of affairs I knew during the many years I lived on the prairie was pregnancy."<sup>145</sup> Forced to retire at sundown because there was no light in the shack, she was determined to improve the household conditions. Rachel realized the situation required her to take matters into her own hands soon after she first arrived. She provided a solution by using mud, a rag scrap wick and butter to

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<sup>140</sup>"Rachel's Journey to America"

<sup>141</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

<sup>142</sup> "Rachel's Journey to America"

<sup>143</sup> Abraham B. Calof, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

<sup>144</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 146.

<sup>145</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 73, 141.

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invent a candle. Prior to this the family had given up their traditional practice because of the great constraint of there not being any candles to greet and bless the Sabbath.<sup>146</sup>

These living arrangements continued for several winters even as their family grew. Rachel looked forward to the coming of each spring so that she, Abraham and their family could move to their own shack and enjoy the dignity of privacy. The Calof's were the parents of nine children, all born while living on the farm in Overland Township. Minnie, the eldest was born in August 1895; Hannah in March 1897; Moses in May 1899; Isaac in 1901; Bessie in 1902; Elizabeth in 1906 and Alec in April 1907. For her last two births, Rachel traveled to Edmore to be near a doctor. Cella was born November 12, 1910, and Jacob on March 12, 1912.<sup>147</sup> All the children attended Victoria School #1 except for Jacob.<sup>148</sup>



Abraham and Rachel Calof Family (circa 1905: source Stan Calof personal collection)

Though they felt pride from success on the farm, they experienced many setbacks and were never completely free of fear, ranging from unpredictable weather to childbirth. Jewish homesteader, Rachel Calof, imagined her firstborn dying and the actualities that would follow. One of the realities reflecting life on the lonely plain was the question of how a person would be buried. The worry of burying someone, especially the children, was that the prairie wolves

<sup>146</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 31-32.

<sup>147</sup> Abraham B. Calof, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

<sup>148</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 88, 97.

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(storytellers called them "the butchers") on the day following burial would pull the body from the grave and feed on the flesh and bones.<sup>149</sup>

In 1917, after 23 years of farming, because of poor health Abraham and Rachel decided to leave the farm and move to St. Paul, Minnesota. Rachel wrote about her early years and the harsh life on the prairie in a notebook with a pencil while living in St. Paul at the age of 55. Her memories were found many years after her death in 1952, translated from Yiddish and published.<sup>150</sup>

Yiddish is the language that most Jews spoke in the country of their birth. It is the language that filled the many tearful letters written between the homesick immigrant and the family members they left behind. Many who had made the United States their new home could only read or write Yiddish, not English. It imbued nearly every aspect of Jewish life and culture.

Moses is buried in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. His brothers, Abraham and Charles (Savol), are buried in St. Paul, Minnesota with their mother. Their father, Solomon Kalov, is buried at Sons of Jacob Cemetery in Garske, North Dakota.<sup>151</sup>



Rachel Calof (circa 1950: source findagrave.com)

Rachel Calof died April 30, 1952. Following is Mrs. Abraham (Rachel) Calof's obituary that was published in the Seattle Times, Thursday May 1, 1952.<sup>152</sup>

Funeral services for Mrs. Rachel Ella [Sic] Kahn Calof, 76, of 614, 20th Ave will

<sup>149</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 61.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, Pg. xi-xii.

<sup>151</sup> Abraham B. Calof, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

<sup>152</sup> Rachel Bella Kahn Calof, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) accessed June 2016.



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be held at noon tomorrow (April 30, 1952) at the Jewish Chapel, with burial in Herzl Cemetery. Mrs. Calof died yesterday.

She was born in Russia and came to the United States 60 years ago. She and her late husband Abraham homesteaded near Devil's Lake N.D. and later lived in Minneapolis several years. She came here from Duluth, Minnesota about 5 years ago.

Mrs. Calof was a member of the Jewish Pioneer Women's Club and Herzl congregation here. She was a member of the auxiliary Workmen's Circle in Minneapolis and the B'nai B'rith in Duluth.

Surviving are four sons, Jacob (Seattle), Mac (St Paul), Jack (St Paul) and Alec (Minneapolis). Five daughters, Mrs. Minnie Rubin (Seattle), Mrs. Bessie Robins (Winnipeg, MB), Mrs. Ceil Longbottom (Portland, OR), Mrs. Hannah Hammerstein (St Paul) and Mrs. Elizabeth Breitbord (Duluth, MN) and 18 grandchildren.

### **8. Max (Mordechai) Calof Immigrant Family**

Max (Mordechai) Calof was born in Russia in 1845 and died June 24, 1903 in Portland, Oregon, where he is buried. He and his wife Slotta (Lotta) were the parents of 8 children as listed on the United States Federal 1900 Census.<sup>153</sup> Mordechai had immigrated alone to America from Steblev, Russia in 1884. His sons, Maier and John, emigrated the next year with Painted Woods Colony as their destination. They left the colony after a short stay and were employed with the railroad building from Minnesota to Montana for the next two years. In 1887 they were preparing to depart for Portland from St. Paul when they heard two Garske Colony settlers speak "of the settlement in most glorious terms." As Mordechai and remainder of his family departed for Portland in 1891, he failed to persuade his sons not to "return to the land." Maier Calof claimed land in Section 33 and John (Leib) in Section 29 of Township 157 North Range 63 West, in Sullivan Township. Maier and Leib were joined by their Uncle Solomon and his family from Russia about 3 years later seeking a better life in Overland Township.<sup>154</sup>

Leib was born in 1867 at Cherkas, Bilotserkivs'kyi district, Kyivs'ka oblast, Ukraine. He died August 28, 1943 in Winnipeg, Division No. 11, Manitoba, Canada.<sup>155</sup> Sarah Zavlovsky was a sister of Doba. She married Leib Calof and they were part of the Jewish settlement in Overland Township. The two couples were married in a double ceremony August 16, 1891 in Ben Zion, Sullivan Township (Ramsey County) with Bessie Greenberg and Max Schlennisn as their witnesses.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>153</sup> "Max (Mordechai) Calof," *Geni*, <https://www.geni.com/people/Max-Mordechai-Calof/6000000029363333549821>

<sup>154</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 131.

<sup>155</sup> "John (Leib) Calof," *Geni*, <https://www.geni.com/people/John-Leib-Calof/6000000047330990113>

<sup>156</sup> "Zelda Robins (Zaslovsky)," *Geni*, <https://www.geni.com/people/Zelda-Robins/6000000029365566333>

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Isaac (Maier) Calof was born in 1868 at Cherkas'ka oblast, Ukraine. He died November 10, 1951 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California, United States where he was buried. He was the son of Max (Mordechai) and Slotta (Lotta) Calof. Maier married Doba Zavlovsky. Doba (Zaslovsky) Calof was born May 4, 1869 in Ukraine. She died February 18, 1948 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California, United States. She was the daughter of Solomon (Menashe) Zavlovsky and Elka Ita Zavlovsky.<sup>157</sup> Doba proved to be a good friend to Rachel Calof. Doba had always been kind and generous to Rachel, sharing a few pieces of sugar or white bread when she could. She helped her to adjust to the rigors of pioneer life on the prairie and recover from postpartum fear and anxiety.<sup>158</sup>

### 9. Davis Rubin Immigrant Family

Davis Rubin's story runs parallel with many of the other immigrants. He left the pogroms and persecution of Odessa, Russia at about the age of 35 and emigrated without his wife, Bessie and children, Max, Sam, Ida and Dora (originally named Daubra but Americanized to Dora) still in the Russian *shtetl*. Bessie, born in 1855 and died 1919, remained in Russia for another seven years until Davis Rubin could earn enough money to buy tickets for their emigration fee. Davis Rubin filed his Declaration of Intention to become a citizen at the Superior Court in the city of New York on June 7, 1893. Using money from the Baron de Hirsch fund, and not in a group, he made his way to North Dakota. On June 20, 1894, he filed homestead papers in Devils Lake Territory on the E 1/2 Section 30 Overland Township and began his life in a sod house.



Bessie and Rubin Davis (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

<sup>157</sup> "Maier Calof," *Geni*,

<https://www.geni.com/people/Maier-Calof/6000000024321454968>

<sup>158</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 55-57, 95.

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September 5, 1899 Davis Rubin's Homestead papers (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

The Section was further divided between himself, 160 acres; B. Ruben, 40 acres; Isaac Beeker, 40 acres; and Dora Ruben, 40 acres; on the 1903 plat map.

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NAME	MERIDIAN	TWP	RANGE	SECTION	ACREAGE	TYPE	CASETYPE	DOCID	DATE
RUBIN BESSIE	05	157 N	062 W	030	39.68	251101	PA	12180	12/17/1906
RUBIN DAVIS	05	157 N	062 W	030	40	251101	PA	5183	12/30/1899
RUBIN DAVIS	05	157 N	062 W	030	39.74	251101	PA	5183	12/30/1899
RUBIN DAVIS	05	157 N	062 W	030	39.8	251101	PA	5183	12/30/1899
RUBIN DAVIS	05	157 N	062 W	030	39.86	251101	PA	5183	12/30/1899
RUBIN DOBA	05	157 N	062 W	030	40	272002	PA	16329	01/14/1903
RUBIN IDA	05	157 N	062 W	030	40	272002	PA	16328	01/14/1903

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Land Patents of four Rubin family members (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

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ubens born in **Russia** in **1854** and died in **North Dakota** in **1936**

1900 United States Federal Census

Name:	<b>David Reubens</b>												
Home in 1900:	Devils Lake, Ramsey, North Dakota												
Age:	45												
Birth Date:	Dec 1854												
Birthplace:	Russia												
Race:	White												
Ethnicity:	American												
Gender:	Male												
Immigration Year:	1891												
Relationship to Head of House:	Head												
Father's Birthplace:	Russia												
Mother's Birthplace:	Russia												
Spouse's Name:	Bessie												
Marriage year:	1875												
Marital Status:	Married												
Years Married:	25												
Residence :	Devil's Lake City, Ramsey, North Dakota												
Occupation:	<a href="#">View on Image</a>												
Neighbors:	<a href="#">View others on page</a>												
Household Name:													
Members:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>Name</th><th>Age</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td><a href="#">David Reubens</a></td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td><a href="#">Bessie Reubens</a></td><td>55</td></tr> <tr><td><a href="#">Dauba Reubens</a></td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td><a href="#">Ida Reubens</a></td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td><a href="#">Sam Reubens</a></td><td>15</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Age	<a href="#">David Reubens</a>	45	<a href="#">Bessie Reubens</a>	55	<a href="#">Dauba Reubens</a>	23	<a href="#">Ida Reubens</a>	20	<a href="#">Sam Reubens</a>	15
Name	Age												
<a href="#">David Reubens</a>	45												
<a href="#">Bessie Reubens</a>	55												
<a href="#">Dauba Reubens</a>	23												
<a href="#">Ida Reubens</a>	20												
<a href="#">Sam Reubens</a>	15												

Source Citation: Year: 1900, Census Place: Devils Lake, Ramsey, North Dakota; Roll T827\_1231; Page: 148; Enumeration District: 126.  
 Source Information: Ancestry.com, 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census.

Davis Rubin's 1900 United States Federal Census (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Siegel)

To make ends meet, Davis contracted to work for a neighboring farmer for 80 cents per day for eight months, for which he was never paid for his labor. In 1907 he moved off the homestead and into Devils Lake. He eventually became a furniture store owner, but his first job was herding cattle, then a junk dealer. A remarkable number of Jewish men in small-town America, especially among the Eastern Europeans, got their start from junk collecting, buying up cast-off scrap metal, household goods, paper, rags, animal fur, and other waste and then preparing it either for sale as used merchandise or cleaned and sorted raw material to be marketed to large repossessors in commercially visible lots. Junk dealing was a business that took almost no start-up capital and yet allowed for a certain level of independence. Another advantage of the occupation was it allowed a great deal of flexibility in scheduling work. This was a benefit especially important to those who wanted to observe the traditional restrictions concerning work on the Sabbath.<sup>159</sup> He had left a half section of land with a mortgage of \$4200 against it, at first renting his land to another farmer, but eventually selling it. During this time, he wrote a letter which runs parallel to the other Jewish immigrants giving insight to the conditions that existed for the settlers:

<sup>159</sup> Weissbach, Pg. 109.



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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*I settled in 1892. I took a homestead and bought land (a quarter section). Got money from the Jewish Society of New York at six percent. We got money from the local banks at twelve percent and a bonus of ten percent, so can't wonder a Jew couldn't farm. The first Jewish settlement was founded by Baron de Hirsch. He was a millionaire and left money for these settlements. He built them homes and got them farming outfits, but most of them left in '88 or '89.*

*There were no donations. When I came in 1892 all the colonial settlers left except three or four. Most of the Jews that came in the '90s made good.*

*The colonial settlers had a rabbi and everything in their religious life. But there was very little or no improvement in the county and very little to do. When they threshed, they slept in the straw piles and drank slough water, and they decided most anything would be better than farming so they left. The Jewish Relief (Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Society) would lend \$500 to \$800 on a quarter section of land.*

*My home was in Overland Township, T. 857, R. 62, Section 30.*

*(signed) Davis Rubin*

One answer to why so many Jews entered the mercantile world is found in Mr. Rubin's biography where he states, "monetary success in the mercantile came faster and more easily than in farming."<sup>160</sup>

The third living child of Davis and Bessie Rubin, Samuel Rubin, born in 1884 was a self-educated man and led an interesting life. He left North Dakota for Winnipeg, as other relatives had done, and started a furniture store without insurance which was destroyed by fire. Moving to Chicago homeless and sleeping in his car, he was inspired with an idea that resulted in him becoming a millionaire. He invented and held the patent on the innerspring mattress.<sup>161</sup>

### **10. Benjamin Greenberg Immigrant Story**

Benjamin (Benny) Greenberg was born in Russia in 1855. Eva (Rosenberg) Greenberg was born in Russia and together they arrived in the United States in 1882 and naturalized. They had a daughter, Anna, born in Russia in July 1878 and a son, John, born in April of 1882 in Russia. The Greenberg family lived in Grand Traverse County Michigan for about 5 years. During their time in Michigan, they had twins, David and Janet, born in February of 1887. They became parents of another son, Schmica, (Sydney) born in a sod house on the Dakota homestead.<sup>162</sup> A decade after homesteading and like most others, suffering, Bennie felt secure and wrote a letter to The American Hebrew Newspaper in New York, which was published in *Memories of an American Jew* by Philip Gowen:

<sup>160</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin families.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Barrie Barstow Greenbie, *The Hole in the Heartland*, Amherst Massachusetts: Spectare Press. 1996, Pg. 2.

Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Name of Property

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*Benzion P.O. Ramsey County., N.D. April 22, 1897*

*Hon. Phillip Cowen: I have read in your paper about the colony at Vineland...I cannot help them financially, but I can advise them not to accept any assistance from anybody. Just try to overcome their misfortune. I know it by my own experience. I came to North Dakota in the spring of 1888. When I left Michigan, I had a couple of hundred dollars, but the expense for myself and family from Michigan to No. Dakota took all of it. When I landed at the depot at Devils Lake I had \$2.50 left in my pocket. I took a preemption claim and I started farming. The first year we had a very fine crop, but a few days before harvesting a frost, and we lost all our crop. Of course we had hard times. We were assisted with provisions to live through. The next two years we lost our crop by drought, and the year '01 we had an abundant crop, the biggest that No. Dak. ever had, but the winter set in so early that we could not thresh, and I lost \$1,500 of grain that rotted in the shacks. A great many of our farmers lost their crops in the same way, so you can see how much we had to stand. In the winter of '01 I lost six horses and four head of cattle, and now I have four good horses and harness, nine head of horned cattle, and all the farm implements: that is plows harrows mower and rack, two self binders, a good lumber wagon, a pair of sleighs, a good frame hose (sic) 18 x 24 with additional summer kitchen, a stable, and plenty of grain and all kinds of poultry chicken geese and turkeys, and all I owe on it is between \$250 and \$300. We make a fine living, and if we had taken assistance from anybody I do not believe we would have remained on the farm. But now I hope, if we get a couple of good crops, we will be well-to-do and I own 160 acres of land free from all encumbrance.*

*I hope you will print my letter so people will read it and know something about farming.*

*We have about twenty families in our colony yet.*

*From a Jewish farmer of the Colony Chanel.*

*Benny Greenberg<sup>163</sup>*

Benny Greenberg had become a respected community leader and a colorful local character who believed in vegetarianism, led Jewish religious services on the holidays and served as Justice of the Peace in Devils Lake.<sup>164</sup> His father, Abraham Greenberg, had been a Justice of the Peace in Russia. Bennie was proud of the fact that he not only was of service to the Jewish population, but to the whole community of Devils Lake. He was fondly described as a small, gray haired man who walked around town with an overcoat stuffed with papers in its pockets (his office).<sup>165</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Greenbie, Pg. 227-228.

<sup>164</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 118; Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Grawoig Family.

<sup>165</sup> Greenbie, Pg. 241.

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Bennie and Eva were divorced in 1912 for reason of desertion by Eva in 1909.<sup>166</sup> The physical limitations and primitiveness of frontier life may have been intolerable for her. How Eva felt about life on the prairie is described in an excerpt found recorded in Sydney (*Schmica*) Greenbie's diary:

*The shadows of the evening came across the limpid waters just as they did at evening on the prairies as I remember when mother would come out in tears and sit behind the house until night enwrapped us. And always I was with her, sorrowing with her as only a baby can sorrow for nothing is more unnatural to an unhurt child than the sight of tears and sufferer.*<sup>167</sup>

Sydney Greenbie traveled and lectured the Chautauqua circuit in 1922. Benny Greenberg's daughter, Anna, would later marry Timothy F. Walsh, financial newspaper editor of the New York World. She was a leader in the Women's Suffrage and American Federation of Women's Clubs and other Socialist movements often debating when in attendance of the temperance and suffrage movement events.<sup>168</sup>

### 11. Israel and Freida Mill/Meil

Israel was born in January between 1836-1842 in Telz Lithuania; and Freida was born in September 1839 in Kovno Guberniya. Israel and Freida were married in 1865 in Russia. Their children, a daughter, Sarah, and sons, Mandel, born in 1860, and Max were also born in Russia. Israel came to the United States in 1884<sup>169</sup> and resided in Chicago. In 1889 Israel heard of a Jewish settlement and land being provided to homesteaders in North Dakota. His wife and children still resided in Europe, but Israel and his younger son, Max, headed from Chicago to North Dakota in a covered wagon to make a life in farming. After settling, building a sod house and establishing a small farm, Israel was able to send for his wife, children and grandchildren to reunite with him in the United States.<sup>170</sup> Israel and Freida, and daughter, Sarah, are listed on the 1900 census of Overland Township SW ¼ Section 33.<sup>171</sup>

### 12. Mandel Mill

Israel's eldest son Menachem (Manacha), whose name became translated as Mandel, and his wife, Sarah, and children stopped in Chicago. Though Mandel wanted to join his parents and sibling, he had to raise enough money to support his own family first. Born in Russia were his daughter, Mollie in 1886, and son Louis, in 1888. Born in Illinois were his sons, Mayer (Michael) in 1892 and Joseph in 1895, and daughter, Rose in 1903.<sup>172</sup> While working to raise the

<sup>166</sup> Greenbie, Pg. 200.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, Pg. 206.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid, Pg. 184, 194.

<sup>169</sup> Melland, Pg. 444.

<sup>170</sup> Sweed, Pg. 7.

<sup>171</sup> Melland, Pg. 444. Spelling of Meil/Mill was determined by the source of information.

<sup>172</sup> <https://www.geni.com/people/Israel-Mill/5016741033550108182> Israel Mill Records show Mandel's wife, Sarah Mill and 30 year old son, Louis, died in 1918 in Devils Lake, year of the Spanish flu epidemic.

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funds, he received a telegram in 1902 that Israel had passed away. Despite both of their labors, father and son were not reunited in America. Israel is buried in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery.<sup>173</sup>

The following year, Mandel did make his move to North Dakota, but not by covered wagon, this time by train. He was able to arrive within twenty-four hours. His wife and children followed, but nearly ended up at the wrong destination as his wife spoke little English. Luckily a Station Master spoke German and assisted them to board the right train. Mandel took over his father's farm, and he and his brother, Max, and his children were finally together again. In 1918 the influenza outbreak caused the entire Mill family to become ill. Most recovered, but Mandel and Sarah's eldest son, Louis, died December 3, 1918, two days before his mother, Sarah, died. The following summer Mandel sold the farm. His sons, Michael (Mayer) and Joseph left for the west coast. Louis left behind his wife, Yetta, and one year old son, Herman, who came to live with the family. Mandel became a lonely man and his lifetime dream was shattered.<sup>174</sup> Max Meil is shown to own 160 acres on SE ¼ Section 7 in 1909.<sup>175</sup>

After departing his farm, Mandel had a little corner store in Devils Lake and in the winter used a horse to pull a small bob-sled loaded with frozen pike and walleye which that he purchased in Minnesota and peddled to the area farmers.<sup>176</sup> Mandel's three children, Michael, Joseph and Rose, attended the Victoria School. Mandel has the distinction of being the last burial in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery in 1935.<sup>177</sup>

Pioneer Lady Passes Away: Sunday night last at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Jacob Borkovitz, occurred the death of Mrs. Freda Meil at the ripe old age of 80 years. Mrs. Meil is the mother of Mandel Meil of Overland and Max Meil of this city and of Mrs. Jacob Borkovitz. She was sick only a short time, her cause of her death being old age. She had lived a life of usefulness and was honored and respected by all who knew her. The funeral services were held here and the remains were shipped to Grand Forks Tuesday where they were laid to rest in the Grand Forks Jewish cemetery at that place. The bereaved ones have the sympathy of all in their hour of sorrow.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Sweed, Pg. 21.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, Pg. 21.

<sup>175</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 73.

<sup>176</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 1, Pg. 19.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, Pg. 444.

<sup>178</sup> "Pioneer Lady Passes Away." *The Devils Lake World and Inter-Ocean*, February 11, 1915, Image 1, Vol. XXX11 #36. [Chroniclingamerica.loc.gov](http://Chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) accessed May 2016.

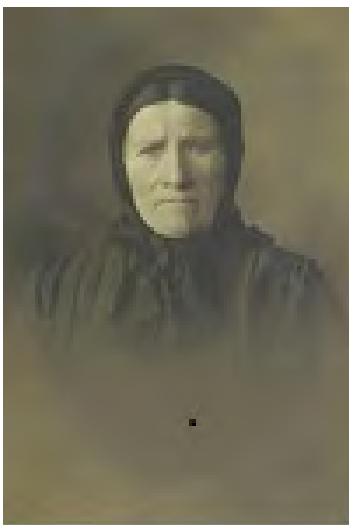


Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Freida Meil (circa 1915: source Geni.com)

## **D. Social Institutions of the Garske Colony**

### **1. Post Office**

The term "Iola" has been used to describe the Garske Colony. The small village of Iola, (named for Iola, Illinois) in Harding Township established a rural post office with John A. Dahlen as postmaster on December 20, 1889, but was discontinued.<sup>179</sup> The mail was then sent to Benzion or Ben Zion, a rural post office established January 30, 1891 with Jewish immigrant, Benyomen (Hebrew) "Benjamin," later known as Ben Greenberg, as Postmaster. The origin and growth of rural Jewish neighborhoods from 1886 to 1894 is reflected in the increase of the number of Jewish farm families from approximately ten to more than forty and by the name of the establishment of the Benzion post office. It was located one mile west and one mile south of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, in the southwest quarter of section 33-157-63, Sullivan Township and seven miles southeast of Starkweather. Mr. Greenberg suggested the name Zion, which was rejected due to duplication in Cass County, but postal officials added the Postmaster's given name as a prefix to coin this unique place name. It was a solitary building and served as the living quarters of Benny Greenberg, one of the first Jewish immigrants to arrive and one of the last to leave. Mail delivery was once a week brought by a team of horses from Devils Lake.<sup>180</sup> In 1898 the post office was moved one-mile northeast to the northeast quarter of section 33-157-63, the home of Phillip Greenberg, newly appointed postmaster by President Grover Cleveland after Benny Greenberg moved elsewhere to live.<sup>181</sup> When the Farmers Grain and Shipping Company

<sup>179</sup> Williams, Pg. 238.

<sup>180</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Grawoig Family.

<sup>181</sup> Benzion (Ramsey County), North Dakota Place Names, accessed July 2016.

[http://www.webfamilytree.com/North\\_Dakota\\_Place\\_Names/B/benzion\\_\(ramsey\\_county\).htm](http://www.webfamilytree.com/North_Dakota_Place_Names/B/benzion_(ramsey_county).htm)

Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND

County and State

Railroad was built to Garske in August 1903 the post office was closed since Garske was only 5 miles southwest of Benzion and offered daily train service and delivery of mail.<sup>182</sup>

## 2. School

The early settlers, in what was to become Overland Township, started a school for their children as soon as they themselves were established. Victoria #1 District #35 was the first school and it was in SW ¼ Section 20 on Solomon Kalov's land.<sup>183</sup> The first session was held June 10-29, 1901 with Michael Dillon as the teacher earning \$32 per month.<sup>184</sup> In the winter the teacher slept in the schoolhouse and often the early morning arrival of the children would awaken him. This resulted in starting the day with a recess while the teacher dressed and cooked his breakfast. The school was referred to as the "Calof School" and served four families with seven students attending, five being Calof's, Abraham and Charles' children. With most of the students in the primary classes, they were instructed in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, language and physiology. When a student finished his current "reader" book, he was promoted to the next grade. Abraham Calof worked hard to create schools on the prairie. Largely through his efforts the first school board in the area was organized and he served with distinction. He was eventually cited with letters of commendation from two presidents of the United States, William Taft and Woodrow Wilson, for his contribution.<sup>185</sup> Anna Greenberg, daughter of Phillip and Mollie Greenberg, attended the prairie school and later became a one room school teacher near her home at the age of 16.<sup>186</sup>

In the early years, the schools were moved around, probably to accommodate the larger families or to have the school closest to the children attending them at the time. Victoria #1 appears in Section 20 in 1909; 28 in 1903; and 32 in 1928, of the early plat maps. There were as many as four schools operating in the district until 1923 when the patrons of the district voted to split the township in the middle, into east and west districts. The western half of the township retained the name of Victoria and the eastern half became known as the Overland District #40.<sup>187</sup>

## 3. The Garske Colony Townships

### *Mini-Profiles-Names and Locations*

Jewish families that established their roots in the following townships of Ramsey County by 1909 are listed with the sites of their homestead and any additional information.

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Melland, Pg. 414; *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. Pg. 418.

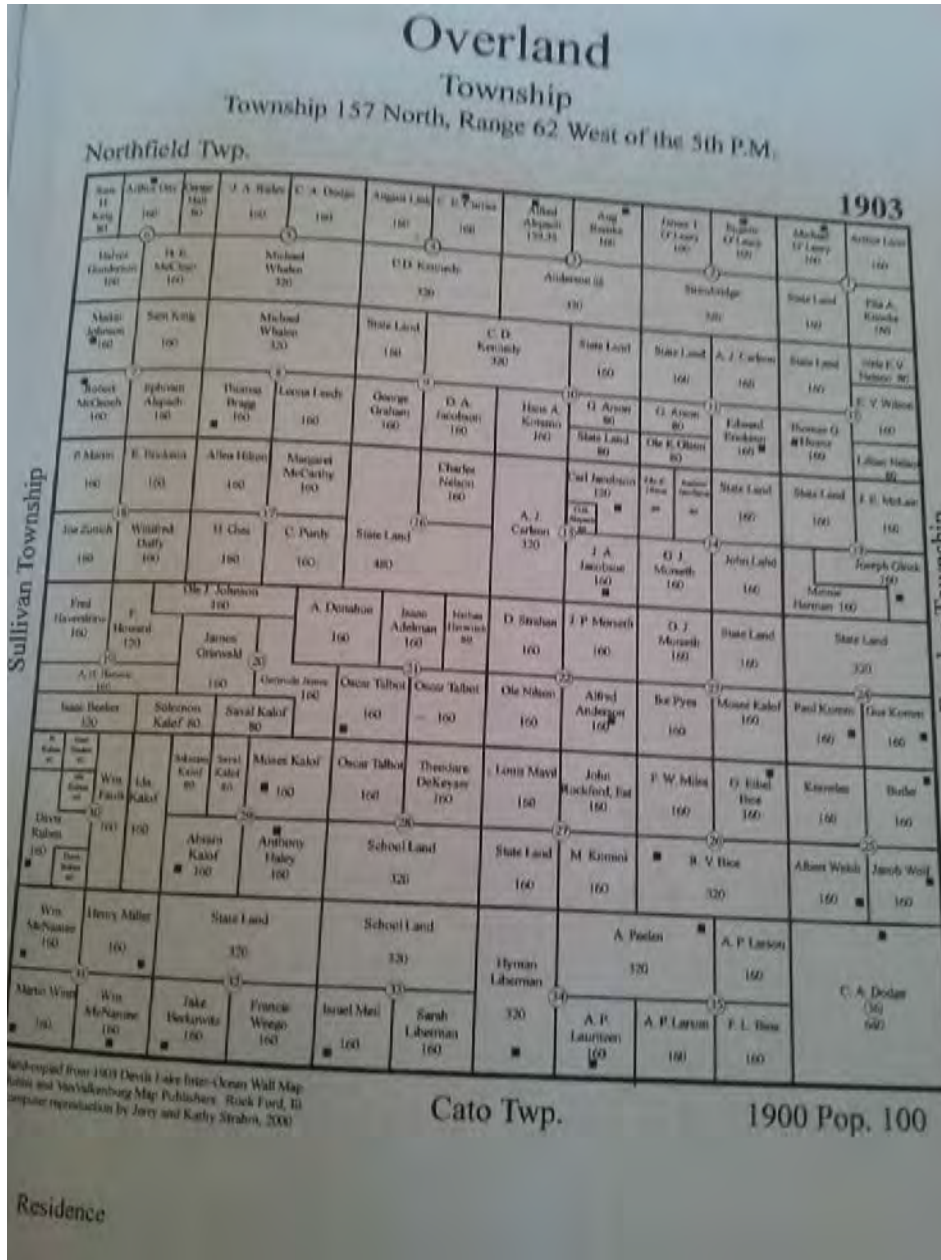
<sup>185</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 87.

<sup>186</sup> Greenbie, Pg. 194

<sup>187</sup> Melland, Pg. 418

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
 Name of Property  
 Overland Township

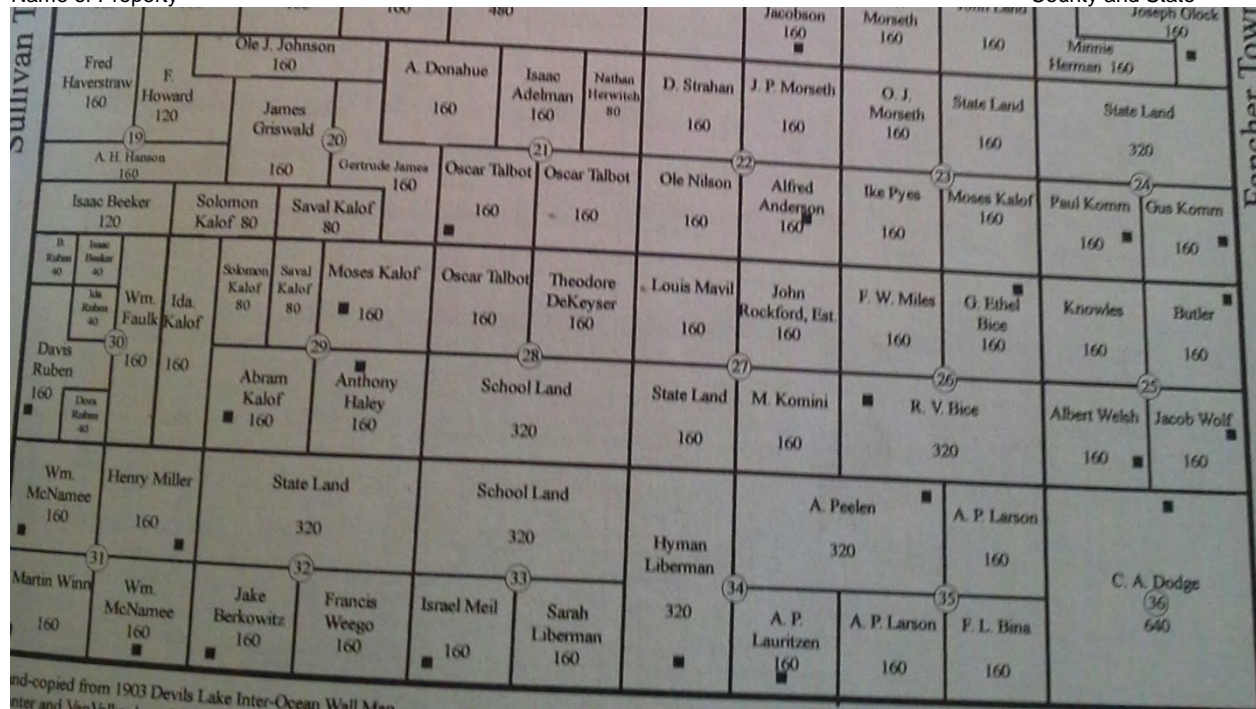
Ramsey County, ND  
 County and State



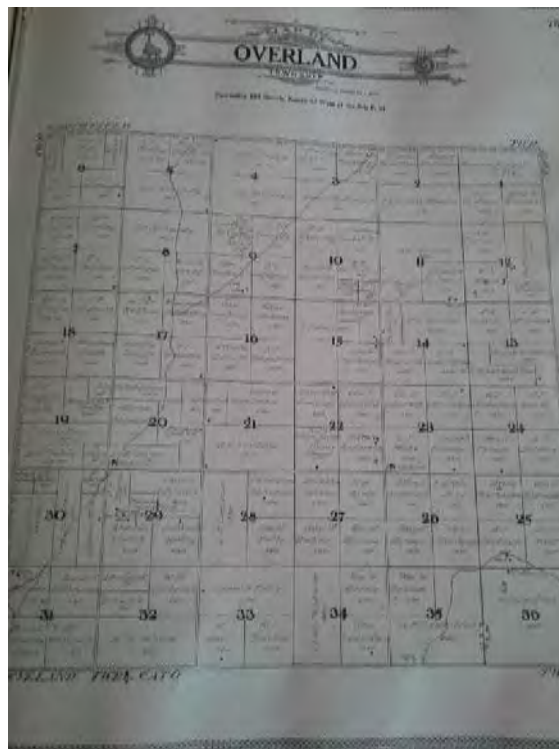
1903 original plat map of Overland Township, Ramsey County and the Garske Colony homesteaders

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
 Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND  
 County and State



Close up of 1903 Overland Township map showing Jewish homestead settlers



1909 original plat map of Overland Township 157 North Range 62 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P. M.



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Ramsey County, ND

Name of Property

County and State

Isaac Adelman homesteaded 240 acres in N Section 21 with a residence. He also homesteaded 200 acres in the north part of Section 29 that included the residence of Joe Adelman and likely two other family member residences.

Isaac Becker, one of the original homesteaders of the Garske Colony, homesteaded on 120 acres in S Section 19, which bordered Solomon Kalof. He also homesteaded on 40 acres in NW ¼ Section 30, which is next to Dora Rubin's homestead and shown on the 1903 plat map.<sup>188</sup>

Joseph Bellis arrived from Smila, Russia with his wife who was born at Farache, Russia. They were the parents of a daughter, Julia, who was born December 13, 1909. This birth was recorded in the Overland Township records on April 14, 1937.<sup>189</sup>

Jake Berkowitz (Borkovitz) homesteaded on SW ¼ Section 32, as shown on 1903 plat map.<sup>190</sup> Perhaps 'Jakob Borkoeitt,' was misspelled in Isaac Adelman's reference to the early farmers who remained after the dry years of 1895-1897. Mr. Berkowitz's wife was the sister of Mandel and Max Mill, one of the 104 original Garske Colony settlers listed on the memorial monument. Jake Berkowitz sold out March 18 1907.<sup>191</sup>

Abraham Calof owned 360 acres in Sections 29, 30 and 32. Sections 29 and 30 had residences.<sup>192</sup> The nearest thing resembling an area village was a settlement four miles east of the Jewish cemetery where the Calof family lived and built houses at the corners of their land where their properties came together. The four houses, barns and granaries had the appearance of a small village and became a prairie landmark, known locally as "Little Palestine" or "Little Jerusalem."<sup>193</sup> The homes were those of the Calof brothers, Moses Kalov, Charles (Savol) Kalov, and Abraham Calof, and cousin, John Calof. Just north of their farms was located the area schoolhouse.<sup>194</sup> Abraham also co-owned some land in partnership with his brother Charles, including 120 acres of school section land they sold in 1910.<sup>195</sup>

Jacob Goldberg homesteaded with a residence on the SW portion of Section 13, shown on the 1909 plot map.<sup>196</sup>

Nathan Herwitch and a son, perhaps Nathan Jr., appear on the 1900 census of Overland Township. Nathan Sr. was born in Russia August 1860 and is listed as a married man of 18 years. His son was born in England, April 1884. They came to the United States in 1887 and are

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid, Pg. 413.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, Pg. 442.

<sup>190</sup> Melland, Pg. 413. (Berkowitz Name Meaning Jewish (Ashkenazic): patronymic from the Yiddish male personal name, Berke, Germanized form of either the Polish spelling Berkowicz or eastern Slavic Berkovich.

<sup>191</sup> Melland, Pg. 420.

<sup>192</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

<sup>193</sup> Sherman, *Plains Folk North Dakota's Ethnic History*, Pg. 392.

<sup>194</sup> Melland, Pg. 414; *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

<sup>195</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 96.

<sup>196</sup> Melland, Pg. 414. (Jewish (Ashkenazic): ornamental name, a compound of German Gold 'gold' + Berg 'mountain,' 'hill,' or occasionally a habitational name of the same origin.)

Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Ramsey County, ND

Name of Property

County and State

listed as a farmer and a farm laborer. They lived on the E 1/2 of the NE 1/4 Section 21, neighboring land to Isaac Adelman's.<sup>197</sup>

Charles (Savol) Kalov homesteaded at the adjoining corners of Sections 19, 20, 29 and 30, owning 40 acres in SE Section 19 adjoining 120 acres in SE Section 20 with location of a School. He also homesteaded 80 acres in Section 29 with 3 residences of the Calof family, and 40 acres of the NE Section 30. He shared half of the NW 1/4 Section 32 with his brother, Abraham Calof, each owning 80 acres.<sup>198</sup>

Solomon Kalov owned 40 acres in the center of Section 29 with a residence.<sup>199</sup>

Louis Kozlof was born in Russia, May 1850. His wife, Rebecca, was born August 1857. They were married in 1872 and were the parents of four sons, all born in Russia; Bennie in 1878, Henry in 1882, Charley in 1886, and Louis Jr. in 1888. The Kozlof's came to Overland Township in 1891, around the same time as the Calof families. The family appears on the 1900 census, the father as a farmer and the sons as farm laborers. It is not known how long they stayed as there is no further mention of them in the township records.<sup>200</sup>

Hyman Liberman homesteaded on 320 acres NW 1/4 and SW 1/4 Sections 34 with a residence in the 1903 plat map.<sup>201</sup> (note business advertisement below after moving off the homestead)



Hyman Liberman Son & Company advertisement in 1912-1913 Devils Lake Directory

Rachel Liberman homesteaded on NE 1/4 Section 31 in 1909.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Ibid, Pg. 443.

<sup>198</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Melland, Pg. 443.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid, Pg. 413.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND  
County and State

Sarah Liberman homesteaded on SE ¼ Section 33.<sup>203</sup>

Bessie Rubin homesteaded 40 acres in NE Section 30.<sup>204</sup>

Davis Rubin homesteaded 239.40 acres on E ½ Section 30.<sup>205</sup>

Jacob Wolfe homesteaded on SE ¼ of Section 25.<sup>206</sup>

Joseph Zunich homesteaded on ¼ SW Section 18 with a residence. He is listed in the 1900 census and his homestead is shown on the 1909 Plat map. He was born in Austria, February 1872. He was married to Freda Hayden who came from Germany where she was born in June of 1871. They were married by a Catholic priest in Devils Lake, June 12, 1897. Their witnesses were Charles and Elisa Budde.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 75.

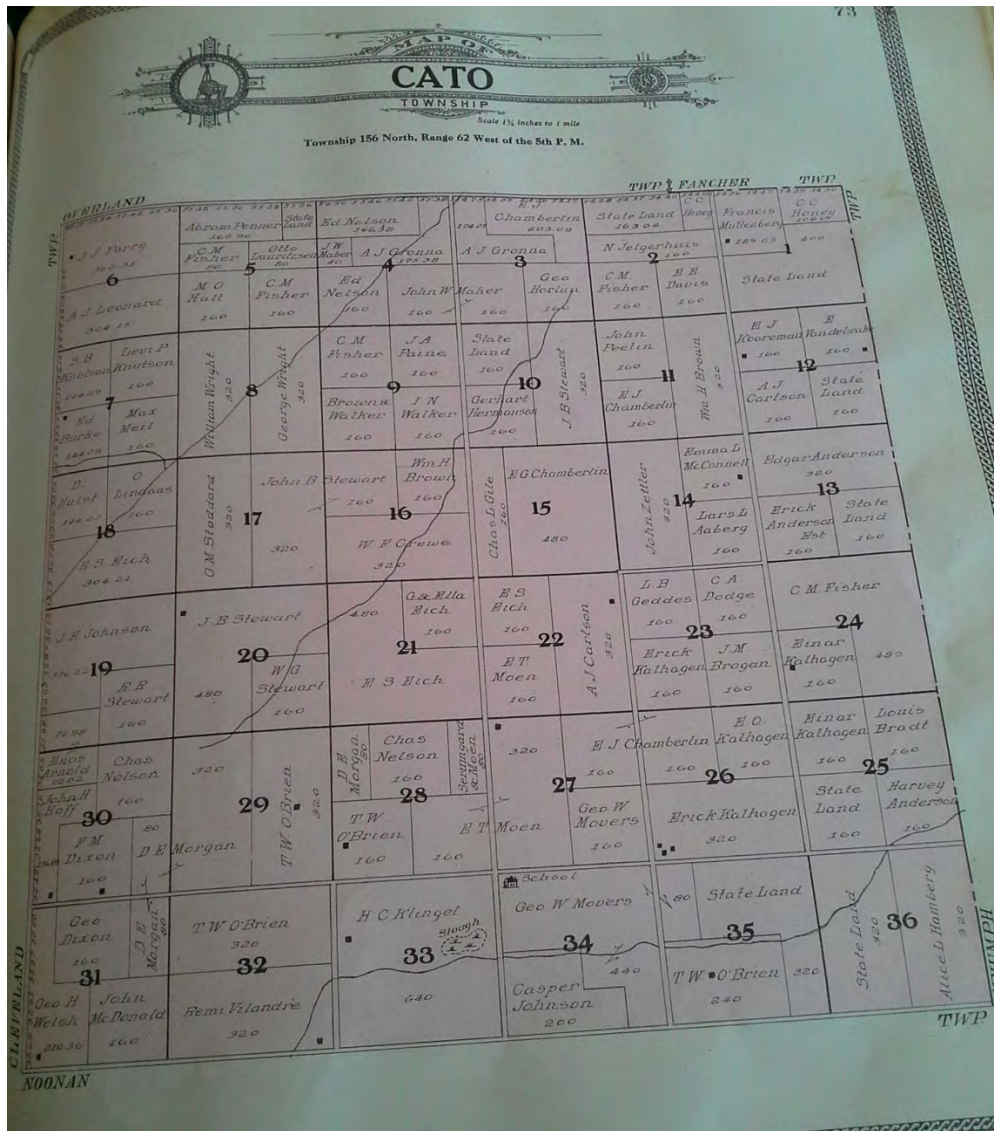
<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Melland, Pg. 413.

<sup>207</sup> Melland, Pg. 445.

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property  
Cato Township

Ramsey County, ND  
County and State



1909 original plat map of Cato Township 156 North, Range 62 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P. M.

Jacob Wolfe is shown to own 640 acres on Section 33 on the 1928 plat map. He had been a resident in Ramsey County since 1883 as a farmer and livestock raiser.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota. Chicago: Brock & Co. 1928. Pg. 40.



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property

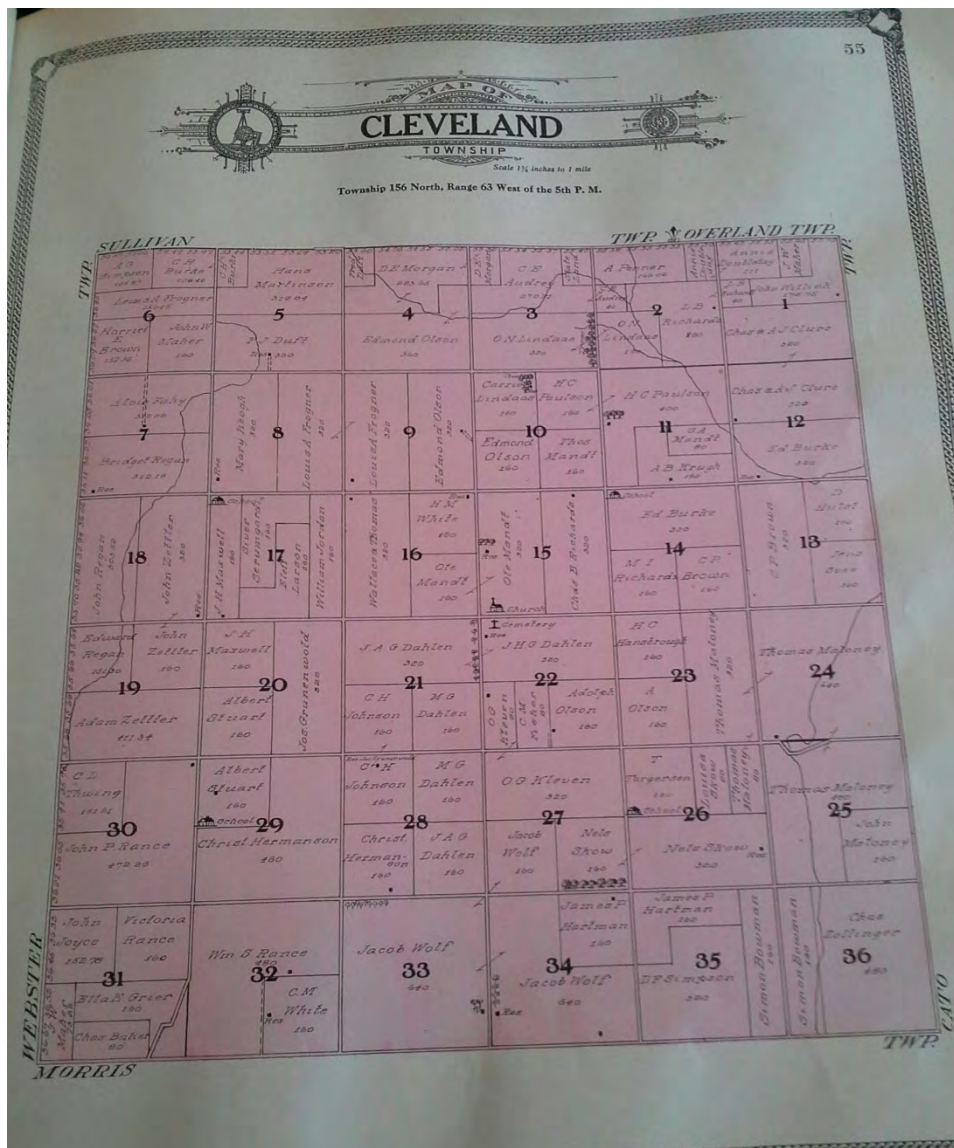
Ramsey County, ND  
County and State



1928 Cato Township plat map, Jacob Wolfe Sec 33, Max Meil, Sec 7, has moved off homestead

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
 Name of Property  
 Cleveland (Harding) Township

Ramsey County, ND  
 County and State



1909 original plat map of Cleveland Township 156, North Range 63 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P.M.

Jacob Wolfe homesteaded 640 acres on Section 33, and 640 acres on Section 34.<sup>209</sup> Jacob E. Wolfe was born in 1851 in Danzig, Poland and died in 1935. At the age of 20 he immigrated to Prescott, Ontario, Canada. In the early 1880s he moved (via covered wagon) near Grand Forks, and later homesteaded in Harding Township. It was reported that he drove the supply wagon from the Jewish settlement to Devils Lake as one of his occupations. In October of 1884 he was

<sup>209</sup> Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota, 1909, Pg. 55.

Sons of Jacob Cemetery

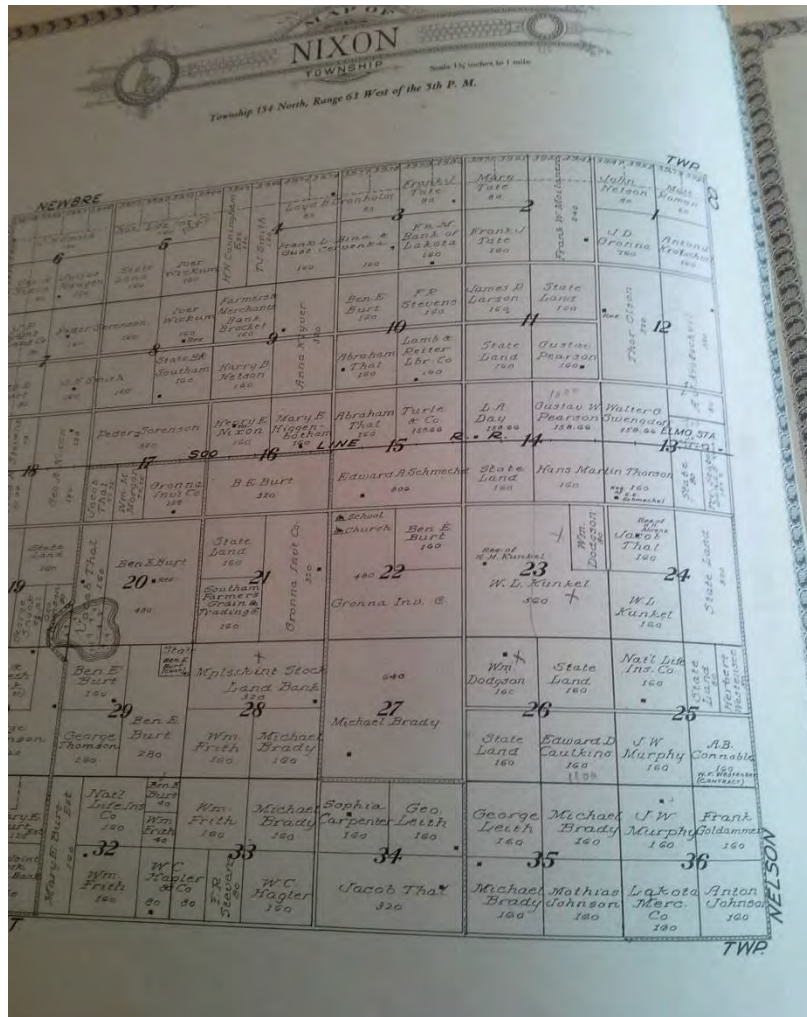
Name of Property

united in marriage to Emma Ludlow (1865-1941) of North Augusta, Ontario Canada. He became an active member of the Masonic Lodge and resided at 715 6th Ave in Devils Lake.<sup>210</sup>

Ramsey County, ND

County and State

Nixon Township



1928 original plat map of Nixon Township 155 North, Range 61 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P. M.

Abraham Thal homesteaded SW ¼ Section 10 with a residence, and NW ¼ Section 15.<sup>211</sup>  
Jacob Thal homesteaded 160 acres with a residence in W Section 20, and NW ¼ Section 24 with the residence of H.H. Ahrens, and 320 acres in S Section 34.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Information acquired from great granddaughter, Cathy Ann Wolfe, Devils Lake North Dakota, April 2016, whose grandfather, John T. Wolfe (aka Jake) was named after Jacob Wolfe. Cathy more recently discovered her Jewish roots and is the last known Jewish descendant in the Devils Lake area.

<sup>211</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota, 1928, Pg. 44.*

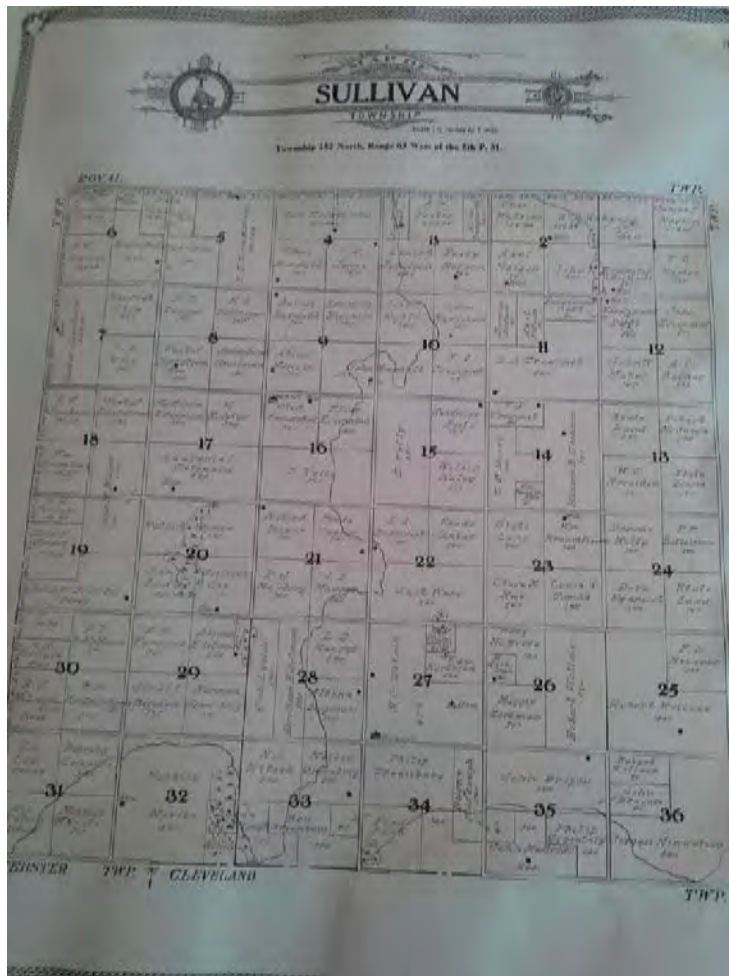
<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND  
County and State

Sullivan Township



1909 original plat map of Sullivan Township 157 North, Range 63 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P. M.

Maier and Leib Calof claimed land in Sections 29 and 33, but had sold out by 1909.

Freda Canter homesteaded NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 21 and NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 22.<sup>213</sup>

Abram Edelman homesteaded 160 acres on NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 29.<sup>214</sup>

Herman Greenberg homesteaded SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 29.<sup>215</sup>

Samuel Wineman acquired the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 26-157-63 in 1892 by pre-emption and sold to Peter Schultz.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>213</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota, 1909, Pg. 53.*

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*



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Nik Kitsch homesteaded a portion of SE Section 32, NW ¼ Section 33, and NW, SE and SW Section 27 with a residence. He owned the School SW Section 27, and the Sons of Jacob Cemetery on the SE ¼ Section 27.<sup>217</sup>

Benny Greenberg homesteaded portions of Section 33.<sup>218</sup> There was never a Jewish community located in the Ben Zion post office vicinity, (SW ¼ Section 33-157-63, Sullivan Township) although it was surrounded with individual owners who occupied their own land, usually a quarter-section of 160 acres.

Mollie Greenberg homesteaded NE ¼ Section 33.<sup>219</sup>

Phillip Greenberg homesteaded the N portions of Section 34.<sup>220</sup>

Triumph Township 1903 and 1909 Plat Map:

Abram Penner homesteaded 160 acres on SE ¼ Section 21.<sup>221</sup>

### ***Township Government***

There were 100 people living in Overland Township 157 North, Range 2 West as recorded by the 1900 census. Most of them were first generation Americans having been born in the Midwestern states. The next largest group came from Russia and was part of the Jewish community that had sprung up northeast of Devils Lake.<sup>222</sup> This group was all farmers or farm laborers except for Herman Wilensky who listed his occupation as a tailor. These earlier settlers were eager to organize their political unit. In 1901, 29 men and one woman, Margaret McCarthy, signed a petition and presented it to the Ramsey County commissioners calling for an election and organizational meeting.<sup>223</sup>

This meeting was held at the Abraham Calof School, in Section 20 on August 1, 1901. Thirty-three voters cast ballots and elected their slate of officers. The naming of the township seemed to be a bigger problem as eight names were suggested with "Overland" receiving most of the votes. Overland is assumed to come from the historic Overland Trail that ran through the township from Fort Totten to the Turtle Mountains. Road work was the main business of the township. Residents were eager to make a little money to work out their taxes. Wages were twenty-five cents per hour for a man or fifty cents per hour for a man and a team of horses. In 1903 it was

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<sup>216</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 3. Dallas Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1982, Pg. 117.

<sup>217</sup> *Standard Atlas of Ramsey County North Dakota*, 1909, Pg. 53.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>221</sup> Melland, Pg. 534-535; PENNER Genealogy: The vast majority of Argentine Jews are descended from immigrants who arrived from Europe. These Ashkenazic Jews migrated from small towns or shtetels of Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Germany, Romania or Ukraine, leaving behind most of their Jewish relatives. After two or three generations, those Jewish families lost track of their relatives, having been saved from the war, emigrated to other countries like USA, England or Australia.

<sup>222</sup> Melland, Pg. 418.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

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decided to purchase a Steel Eta Grader from the Austin Western Company of Chicago for the sum of \$1400. By 1916 contracts were issued for the building of roads.<sup>224</sup>

Abraham Calof attempted to establish a formal social environment to share customs, beliefs, behaviors and ideas to support the Jewish culture and help build a stable community since the isolated farm families did not have such a place near them. A community without a social context would not be able to continue its cultural distinctiveness.

In a letter to the editor of the Edmore Herald News, published December 20, 1905, Abraham Calof describes an attempt to organize his spare time for intellectual and social ends:

As farmers, we always try to pass our spare time in a pleasant and progressive way. This means we have always the intention to give our life the color and shape of city people.

Accordingly, we five families, living close to one another, have organized a society called "The Farmers' Sociability."

Here are the principal rules for the new organization. All the members are divided into three classes according to ages from ten to fifteen and older. The committee, which consists of a representative from each class should make up a program for every evening, Literature, science, debates, oratory, music, and dances will make up the programs. We are in full hopes that the new style of sociability will be of benefit to every one of our members and that we and our children will gladly participate in the new organization which has the sociability and scientific platforms.<sup>225</sup>

Hampden is a small community about 4 miles further east on ND #17 and 9 miles north on Ramsey County #3 from the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. The following article is excerpted from the 1912 Hampden Newspaper written by Abraham Calof, the Sage of Overland Township, who pointed out the advantages of the township clubs and wanted some organized.<sup>226</sup>

Many times a man lives thru something which he does not take earnestly, not thinking that it will sometimes make the first play on life. Of course, we mean individual life but it is a true fact that such happenings occur in communities and in nations, one side of a man turning or forming a whole group and the whole life becomes different and with other results. It is not quite a year, or in the winter of 1911, when the county superintendent of schools, J.A. Haig, called a meeting of the school board directors in the county court building...He showed the pleasure of a sociable life, and with glancing words showed what uniting will do and with inspiration cried out: 'farmers form clubs in your townships, come together in your clubs oftener and oftener.' It is not quite a year since Mr. Haig has sown these kernels and the results are already seen. Clubs have been formed and already a new life shines in the farmer's atmosphere. Many of the hardships that the farmer was compelled to undergo, and which he kept to himself because he had

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid, Pg. 418.

<sup>225</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 96-97.

<sup>226</sup> Letters from Homesteaders (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

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no remedy for them at hand, can now be removed and instead of forsaken farms and divided families, where the children of the farms fly away to the cities like birds from their nests, the farm home will then become a real 'home sweet home.'

Dear people, I am a friend of everything that lives and breathes, but as I am a farmer. I love the farmer best and therefore would like to see him happy. I know that everything he owns was bathed in his own sweat and therefore I see that the club in his community is the angel of his fortune.

Mr. Calof goes on to suggest that the clubs have buildings with a stage, a piano and maybe a skating rink. These clubs would sponsor dances, plays, debates, discussion about farm business etc. He ends with: "Nothing is too big or heavy if we have the will to finish the task set before us."<sup>227</sup>

### III. The Homesteading Experience of the Garske Colony Jewish Settlers

#### A. Farming, Assistance and Loans

The major influx of Jewish homesteaders took place between the years of 1887 and 1890, over ninety adult Jewish men and women of the Garske Colony are known to have filed.<sup>228</sup> After 1887's poor crop, the neighboring gentile population was at first sympathetic to the Jewish colonists and understood the problems which they were facing, but due to the national bad publicity, prejudice was created. Their Christian neighbors raised money to send a committee representing the Jewish settlers to St. Paul to raise desperately needed funds.<sup>229</sup> In the early winter of 1888 two Garske Colony leaders arrived in Minneapolis-St. Paul to request financial assistance which resulted in Devils Lake becoming part of the social welfare program of the Twin Cities Jewry. The delegates were well recommended by six of Devils Lake's "most prominent citizens who gave them letters which set forth their needs and entire worthiness."<sup>230</sup> The two delegates went first to the Sons of Jacob congregation in St. Paul, where they had relatives from the old country;<sup>231</sup> but the funds which they could obtain were not of the magnitude needed for the replenishment of the colony. They requested aid from Mount Zion and the results were the same for their congregation had just concluded four years of heartbreaking experiments with Painted Woods. They were now with a new Rabbi, Emmanuel Hess, who was unfamiliar with the situation, and were neither financially nor psychologically ready to take on Devils Lake as a further philanthropy and social project. The delegates turned to Minneapolis which had grown tremendously and had a prosperous Jewish community with no prior responsibility for Painted Woods.<sup>232</sup> Because of the controversy over support for Painted Woods

<sup>227</sup> Letters from homesteaders, (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

<sup>228</sup> Sherman, *Prairie Mosaic: An Ethnic Atlas of Rural North Dakota*, Pg. 112-113.

<sup>229</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 225.

<sup>230</sup> Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 67.

<sup>231</sup> Some names of the original and early Garske Colony settlers are listed in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery of St. Paul, MN as Julius and Morris Glickson, Lieberman, Levy, Frankel, Goldberg, Berkovitz, Horwitz, Sam Rosenthal, Jacob Friedman and others.

<sup>232</sup> Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 67.

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and Devils Lake with their successes and failures, the colonies remained familiar names for many years to the Jews of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the struggles having been printed in the *American Israelite*.<sup>233</sup> The colonies were a hard school for all concerned forcing the two communities to learn the meaning of concerted communal social giving and planning.<sup>234</sup> The visit of Jewish Garske Colony farmers to St. Paul also served to recruit more families, speaking “of the settlement in most glorious terms, and pictured the life of the colonists as the most blessed.”<sup>235</sup>

Minneapolis was ready to contribute to the cause of the Jewish reconstruction with Joseph Harpman and Joseph Kantrowitz and E. Rees as their leaders who in the fall of 1889 visited for five days at the Garske Colony with the purpose of examining and assessing the situation of the present standing and outlook of the Colony. The committee found the settlers at the Garske Colony living in extreme poverty and in a state of emergency. They found appalling conditions, little children with neither shoes nor stockings, “trying to keep warm on the sunny side of the house.” They reported a pitiful sight with worn out clothing, threatened by starvation, and few resources to live through the winter or plant new spring crops. They also found the local banks at fault for their high interest rates and for mandating settlers to give yearly chattel (a personal possession, an item of property other than real estate) mortgages on crops and livestock. This practice made it possible for creditors to take hold of the very items that provided farmers with their cash earnings. In one case, a bank obtained the livestock and farming implements of a sixty-year-old Jewish man.<sup>236</sup> The Minneapolis visitors suggested the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society purchase all the chattel mortgages, running \$8,000-\$10,000.

Most farmers could not keep up with their payments on Jewish agency loans at 6 percent, but at least for a few years their sponsors were likely to extend time payment schedules. Local bank and business debtors held notes at twice the interest rate normally charged by the Jewish organizations. Few creditors of any kind sought foreclosures, perhaps because there were so few assets to claim and most of the homestead land was still under the five-year “proving-up” period and thus still legally owned by the government. Area banks and businesses knew of the Jewish agencies, though, and for a few years at least sought to support the case of their debtors. The committee returned with the focus of helping the farm families who were still on the homesteads. Harpman declared, “All reports stating that their condition is not as bad as published are from people who are interested in concealing the true state of affairs, their object being to counteract the possible result on immigration and capitalist.”<sup>237</sup> The investigating committee sent out a national appeal emphasizing the needs of the immigrants. Anti-Semitism remained at an absolute minimum even though Joseph Harpman, Joseph Kantrowitz and E. Rees reported the appeal for help caused prejudice among the colony's neighbors, who did not like the bad publicity given to their area.<sup>238</sup> The appeal was a financial success and collections came from Jews and Gentiles all over the country. They came from B'nai B'rith lodges and agricultural

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, Pg. 68.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid, Pg. 70.

<sup>235</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 119.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, Pg. 120.

<sup>237</sup> Plaut, “Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake,” Pg. 68.

<sup>238</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 226.



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societies from the east and west. San Francisco's Jews were most generous with their first contributions amounting to \$1,135.65.<sup>239</sup> Other forms of assistance by local agencies and charitable gentile neighbors were made. An incident of being good neighbors is told by Mike Connor, whose family was among the neighboring homesteaders of how an individual whose family name is on the memorial at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, helped his parents through a very stressful time during their early married years, and when his dad asked "how can I ever repay you?" the individual replied, "Your parents helped my parents, now it is my turn to help you." A free service provided by the St. Paul and Manitoba Railroad, carried a load of 1300 pounds of flour, barrels of beans and rice, four cases of clothing, seeds for spring planting and wood for heating to the Devils Lake settlers.<sup>240</sup> Because of the scarcity of wood on this treeless plain the homesteaders referred to their initial repugnance of having to collect the most abundant fuel, dried buffalo dung, to cook and heat with.<sup>241</sup> The ability of most families to survive the harsh winters or to plant crops each spring almost entirely depended on organized emergency relief operations. The Dakota Relief Committee was formed with Harpman as Treasurer and with Jews from St. Paul and Minneapolis to assist with the social welfare of the Colony. The result was summarized by Harpman's statement, "There is now enough and to spare for present needs."<sup>242</sup> In 1889 the Jewish farming community holdings consisted of 3,500 acres of cultivated land with 2,650 in wheat and flax, 300 in oats, and the remainder in barley and potatoes. The increase of the Jewish farm population at this time represented:

1. The availability of credit and philanthropy that at least half of the newly arriving settlement families received from New York, Chicago, Minneapolis or St. Paul
2. The want of early settlers to join their extended family members on the ND Plains
3. The spread of information on the ND movement to immigrants in Midwestern and Eastern cities<sup>243</sup>

An economically secure farming operation did not exist for even those families that managed to fund their own move in the beginning year or two on a Ramsey County homestead. They turned eventually to philanthropic support for funds to purchase necessary supplies. The Homestead Act proved not to be a solution for all the difficulties the settlers faced. Just because it was a "free farm" did not guarantee that the farmer would be successful. Money and experience were also necessary ingredients in a successful homestead operation. Few Jewish homestead farmers could afford to build a farm or acquire the necessary tools, seed, and livestock. The Ramsey County government helped organize local relief drives and provided small amounts of food, seed, and other goods. In 1890 after another highly unsuccessful harvest County Auditor Henry Hale<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 68.

<sup>240</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 119.

<sup>241</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 142.

<sup>242</sup> Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 68.

<sup>243</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 118.

<sup>244</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 1, Pg. 102. Henry Hale had previously served in the U.S. Army of Reconstruction of the South, Fort Totten Hospital Steward, became an early pioneer and was elected Ramsey

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made a compassionate request to Judge Myer Isaacs in New York to "investigate conditions (of Jewish families) and see if they are not proper subjects for you to aid." Hale noted the settlers would surely need food and clothing to survive the winter, "fuel," he added, "I believe the County will be able to provide as there is an effort being made to obtain it from the military reservation (Fort Totten) here."<sup>245</sup>

One month after receiving Hale's letter the general agent of the JAIAS, A.S. Solomons, received a letter from Devils Lake businessman, Henry C. Hansbrough.<sup>246</sup> Jewish farmers owed him over three thousand dollars for farming implements alone. Hansbrough noted that difficult times "prevail largely among other residents here" and in true agricultural optimism closed by writing that "prospects for a harvest next year are good and if Providence smiles upon the people further assistance will be unnecessary."<sup>247</sup>

The few remaining Jewish homesteaders were joined by new settlers who persevered under difficult economic and adverse living conditions, and in 1892 the colony was considered a success.<sup>248</sup> Excerpt from a handwritten letter: "I have noticed one distinct difference between the Wing and Devils Lake Colonies. At Wing and Regan all settlers homesteaded or lived on 160 acres. At D.L., Issac Adelman, for instance, owned 440 acres, Savol Kalov owned 400 acres. This would indicate that the more enterprising Jewish farmers accumulated more land as they prospered. At Wing, they just don't seem to own more than they homesteaded. Of course, the land at the Wing settlement was impossible to live on as a self-sufficient farm unit. Even today cattle graze on the pasture tracts."<sup>249</sup>

A problem the farmers faced was the timing of the harvest when the crop matured. If postponed, the crop faced the dangers of frost, hail, insects and fire. Maier Calof reported on the crop:

Abundant it took twice as much time to harvest it. A separator (threshing machine) was needed; not one was available in the colony. It took me a few days before I returned with the machine and the day I came back was the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. We had to postpone the work until after the holidays. There is an old Yiddish saying: "The man thinks and God laughs." And we, too, felt God's laughter for on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, a heavy rain occurred and later a white snow fell. It was a great blow to all of us. The difficulties were partly overcome, but with hard labor and heavy losses to the crop. The stacks of grain froze and this later molded. The commodity had to be sold for a lesser price which did not even cover our expenses in the end.<sup>250</sup>

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County auditor in 1888 and representative, then senator of the 21<sup>st</sup> District of the State Legislature. Since the homestead days, he had always been interested in agriculture.

<sup>245</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 120.

<sup>246</sup> W.L. Dudley, *Devils Lake Illustrated*, Press of Grand Forks Herald, Grand Forks, ND: 1898, Pg. 96. Henry C. Hansbrough arrived in Dakota Territory in 1882 where he was engaged in newspaper work until he entered politics in 1888 as a delegate to the Republican National Convention. He was elected United States Senator in 1891.

<sup>247</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 121.

<sup>248</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 226.

<sup>249</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin Families.

<sup>250</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 121.

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A group of Ramsey County farmers approached both Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America (JAAS) and JAIAS for money to purchase a steam engine and grain separator. After four years of documenting the need for the machinery, the New York society granted a loan of \$2,182 at 6 percent interest. In the first year of work, the settlers used the machinery to thresh over 16,500 bushels of grain, including over 8,500 bushels of flax their principal cash crop.<sup>251</sup> One of the beneficiaries of the machinery, Phillip Greenberg, told Abraham Levy of the JAAS that this "is the first time that the crop of the Jewish farmers had been threshed before November since they have been here."<sup>252</sup>

Farmer Phillip Greenberg reported on the success of the colony in 1901:

"We had a very good crop this year and all the Jewish farmers greatly benefited by the threshing machine, which the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Society of New York placed here. All the farmers threshed in good season."<sup>253</sup>

No. of bushels of wheat	1600
No. of bushels of oats	3233
No. of bushels of flax	8567
No. of bushels of barley	2833

Greater economic stability existed in the Jewish farm community from around 1898-1907. However, the overall Jewish population number decreased during that time from approximately thirty to twenty families. Families continued to move in and out of the area, but the pace of exchange seemed no more dramatic than in most other North Dakota areas during the same period.<sup>254</sup>

The peak year for Jewish farming was 1910 when North Dakota had the fourth largest number of Jewish homesteaders in any state in the United States with 1200 farmers on two hundred fifty homesteads in at least fifty settlements spread out over at least twenty-three counties.<sup>255</sup> The Jewish farmers could satisfy their urge to try farming because homestead land was still available in the Dakotas as late as 1910, although by then the remaining acreage was of marginal productivity. Many, if not most of these farmers were successful enough to have owned their land under the Homestead Act, then sold it after the five-year requisite and moved far and near to cities and towns.<sup>256</sup> The core of the Jewish community solidified in a region encompassing the southern sections of Overland and Sullivan Townships and northern portions of Cato and Harding Townships. Plat maps of Ramsey County show these townships consisted of people from 22 foreign countries including Danes, Swedes, Germans, Czechs, Poles, Finns, Hungarians, and Greeks. People of Russian ancestry were the third largest immigrant group.<sup>257</sup> The Jewish Russian ancestry was outnumbered by the Canadians and Norwegians. In some cases, members

<sup>251</sup> Ibid, Pg. 121-122.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid, Pg. 122.

<sup>253</sup> Letters from Homesteaders (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>254</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 122.

<sup>255</sup> Schulte, Pg. 238.

<sup>256</sup> Schulte, Pg. 238-239.

<sup>257</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 141.

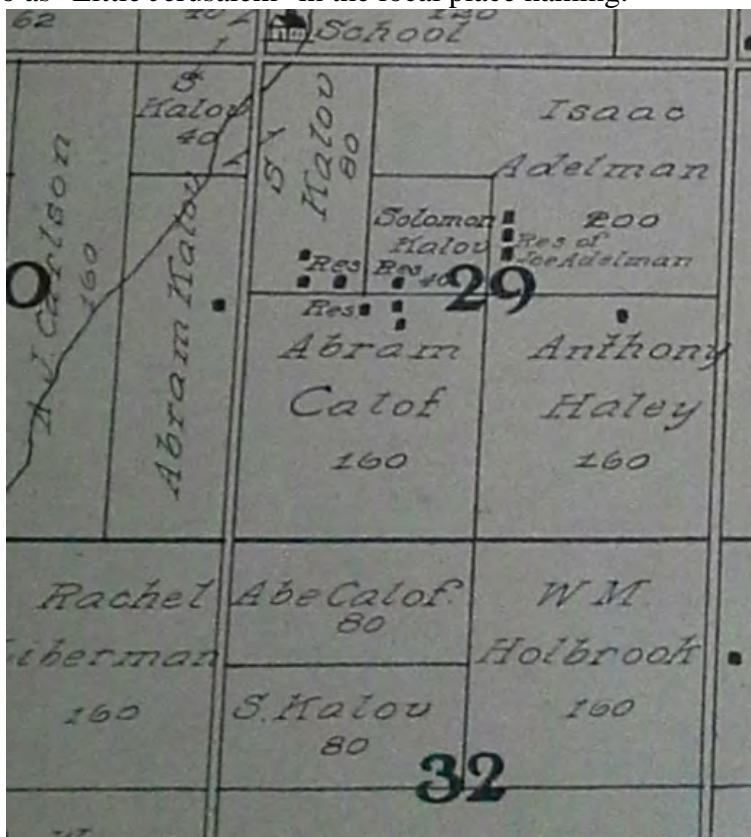
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of a Jewish immigrant family could file on adjoining tracts forming larger holdings. Eventually each of the Calof family built their homes, barns and granaries near the common center corner. This was referred to as "Little Jerusalem" in the local place naming.<sup>258</sup>



Close-up view 1909 Sullivan Township plat map of what was referred to as "Little Jerusalem" with houses, barns and granaries

### **B. The Garske Colony's Jewish Religious Traditions**

In 1912 the Garske Colony was still in existence and was North Dakota's oldest Jewish farm settlement at the time.<sup>259</sup> It had a full community life. Judaism was practiced and celebrated on the prairie by the Garske Colony where they had the liberty to conduct themselves as stated in their religious laws and guided them to be good citizens. In some circumstance, religious ritual, customs and *kashrut* (the body of Jewish religious laws concerning the suitability of food, the fitness for use of ritual objects) seemed to cause difficult choices for the families. Decisions surrounding how much Jewishness one would maintain may have been influenced by the practices of the other Jewish neighbors. Ashkenazic Orthodox Jews were expected to respect prohibitions against all forms of work on the Sabbath and to keep kosher dietary laws. Families

<sup>258</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 123.

<sup>259</sup> Garske Colony (homepage) [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org); Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 69.



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adapted Jewish practices to the unpredictable circumstances of North Dakota. They were forced to work on the Sabbath for wages on nearby farms to pay debts, purchase necessities and do necessary tasks as milking a cow.<sup>260</sup> Keeping Kosher is one of the most central parts of Jewish religious and cultural tradition. They were faced with the temptation to eat non-kosher food to keep from going hungry. Rachel Calof writes of several accidental examples, mistakenly buying and knowingly eating pickled pigs' feet and the mixing of meat and milk when her mother-in-law cared for her after the birth of one of her children when noodles, chicken and milk were prepared for her. The mother-in-law refused to warm the milk for Rachel's new born baby because it was the Sabbath and lighting a fire would have been considered a prohibited labor. It would seem in times of almost starvation, especially during the winter months living in the Garske Colony, due to laws forbidding ability to hunt and eat abundant deer and rabbits, it would have been a struggle to remain faithful. However, Rachel writes that even though the family was in a desperate way at the end of a hard winter, they did not consider the killing and eating of an animal that had not been ritually slaughtered in line with the rules of their religion which would have required a shochet.

Isak Edelman's story recalls "...the religious doctrine and practices were kept up, and devotional exercises were carried on in the homes, but after a while a schoolhouse was built and then the devotion was carried on there."<sup>261</sup> During these years, many High Holiday services were held in the home of Phillip and Mollie Greenberg, who not only had one of the largest homes in the area, but also owned a Torah. The Greenberg family claimed that they were related to Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), the leader of England's Jewish community and who at one time was "Sheriff" of London. At the time of Montefiore's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Greenberg's were living in Traverse City, Michigan with a small group of Jews without a Torah. Phillip Greenberg's father, Abraham, wrote to Montefiore and told him of their plight. He then sent Abraham the Torah that was brought to North Dakota in 1887 and remained in Ramsey County until 1907 when the family moved to St. Paul.<sup>262</sup> The Greenberg's home and Abraham and Rachel Calof's home were selected to be the center for all the Jewish holiday celebrations for the Jewish farmers. These home gatherings provided a happy time of friendship and escape from the loneliness of the prairie.<sup>263</sup>

Rachel wrote in her autobiography:

Our home became the center for all the Jewish holiday celebrations. Jewish farmers came from far and near...some traveling for days by horse and buggy and by horseback.

These were wonderful and festive events. Everyone stayed for the duration of the holiday. We put up tents for the visiting children's sleeping quarters, and in the house, sleepers occupied all the chairs and covered the floors.... guests were so numerous that Abe devised an apparatus to ease the distribution of food at mealtimes. He drove an iron shaft into the center of the table, which acted as an axle upon which revolved a huge

<sup>260</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 146. Abraham Calof violated the Sabbath by working for wages on nearby farms.

<sup>261</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Edelman.

<sup>262</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 132.

<sup>263</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 85, 123.

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wagon wheel covered with a board face...During meals, the wheel was always in motion and one needed only to wait a moment or two to find the desired food before him.<sup>264</sup>

Holidays are at the center of any religion. In Judaism, *Shabbat*-the Sabbath, which begins on Friday at sundown and continues until Saturday at sundown, is considered the most important religious holiday. The most Holy Days, *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, were the more highly attended services, but much of the settlers adhered to Orthodox traditions.<sup>265</sup> As the Devils Lake community grew and additional families settled in area towns, High Holiday services were held in the courtroom in Devils Lake where "all judicial business was suspended" on *Rosh Hashanah* (one of the holiest days of the year-a time to reflect on past mistakes and plan changes for the new year, Leviticus 23: 24-25) and *Yom Kippur*. As a consideration of Jewish High Holy Days to the families in the area, court dates were not set in the fall of the year until High Holiday dates were first known and scheduled. Myer Shark, who grew up in Devils Lake said, "I can picture the *bimah*," or synagogue podium. It was where the judge sat."<sup>266</sup>



Ramsey County Courthouse 1887 (photo courtesy of Leighton Siegel)

In relation to a minyan, told by Diane Leighton, granddaughter of Garske Colony settlers, it was often her grandfather, Davis Rubin, who conducted the services and often acted as Rabbi for other Jewish occasions. Being there was no regular rabbi in the region from the time of first

<sup>264</sup> Ibid, Pg. 85-87.

<sup>265</sup> "Life, Death and Mourning," *Judaism* 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/death.htm> accessed June 2016.

<sup>266</sup> Rachel Silverman, "North Dakota Jews' descendants mark cemetery, preserve memories," July 27, 2006. [www.haruth.com/jw/USA/nodak\\_descendents.htm](http://www.haruth.com/jw/USA/nodak_descendents.htm). Accessed April 2016.

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settlement until the early 1890s, special or formal needs were met by the visits of rabbis, *shochets*, and *mohels* from St. Paul, Minneapolis, Grand Forks or other larger towns who would come and stay in Devils Lake while teaching the boys Hebrew.<sup>267</sup> The Garske Colony attempted to maintain their own *schochet* and teacher, but relinquished after a few years. Being early rural Americans forced them to make compromises and improvisations concerning their religious practices. The humble *mikvah*<sup>268</sup> was a natural body of water from melting snow and rain built into the ground. As the story goes, the mikvah was destroyed when a horse got away and trampled right through everything. Despite the limitations of their physical environment, these settlers were still successful in retaining their religious and cultural community, their Jewishness.

A listing of the *Discovery of Local Jewish Organizations in the United States* that appeared in the 1919 Jewish American Yearbook, one of the few comprehensive inventories of local Jewish institutions ever published, lists Devils Lake's congregation as B'nai Israel with Rabbi Simon Rapoport and the Hebrew Russian Aid Society congregation 12 miles from Edmore as having Sam Yaffe of Starkweather; a cemetery is listed in Sullivan Township and it is noted that it is also used by the Jews of Devils Lake.<sup>269</sup> Sam Yaffe, of the Sons of Abraham Synagogue in St. Paul, was the first *Chedar* (a traditional elementary school teaching the basics of Judaism and the Hebrew language) teacher serving Grand Forks arriving in 1894-1895 and staying for five years. He doubled as sexton for the High Holidays. He made visits to the colony that lasted only one or two days, but on occasion he stayed for a few weeks to take care of the training and preparations for a boy's *bar mitzvah*.<sup>270</sup>

B'nai Israel, Grand Forks Synagogue, formed in 1881, and was served by Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster at that time.<sup>271</sup> Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster had been sent by the chief rabbi of his home town Kovno, Lithuania arriving in Fargo in 1883 before moving to Grand Forks in 1891. He had been told it was his Jewish duty to render his urgently required service to the settled communities of America. The Rabbi's brother and sister, already in New York, objected to his going to North Dakota. Its country was described as wild, chiefly inhabited by Indians and questioned the possibility of any Jews living there. However, it is believed it was not until his first trip to Devils Lake that he saw a real Indian.<sup>272</sup>

Rabbi Papermaster may have been the first Rabbi to become a resident in the state, but Rabbi Glicke is also mentioned by Isak Edelman as serving in the Garske Colony from 1886-1896. Isak Edelman stated, "by that time so many Jews had left the farm it became hard to support the

<sup>267</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin Families.

<sup>268</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 133. *Mikvah* is the ritual bath prescribed for women at the end of their menstrual period or following the birth of a child.

<sup>269</sup> Weissbach, Pg. 20.

<sup>270</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 123.

<sup>271</sup> Victor Lieberman, "The Early History," *History of the Synagogue-B'nai Israel*.

[www.bnaiisraelnd.org/history\\_of\\_the\\_synagogue.htm](http://www.bnaiisraelnd.org/history_of_the_synagogue.htm) accessed April 5, 2016. In an email dated April 5, 2016, Bert Garwood, Vice President of B'nai Israel Synagogue, revealed the records of the period are sparse and mostly in Yiddish. Presently the synagogue Archives are housed in the special collections at the Chester Fritz library at UND.

<sup>272</sup> Isadore Papermaster, "History of the North Dakota Jewish Community," September 1, 1959. *International Jewish Cemetery Project*. [www.bnaiisraelnd.org](http://www.bnaiisraelnd.org) accessed 2016.

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church organization."<sup>273</sup> Beginning in the autumn of 1892 Rabbi Papermaster served the settlement as a religious leader, *mohel*, and *shochet*. The Rabbi brought with him a gift from his wife's family before he left for America, a Sefer Torah (a book of Hebrew religious literature, a scroll containing the Torah). He used this Sefer Torah throughout his career on all his trips throughout the northwest where he was called for various purposes in communities.<sup>274</sup> High Holiday services were held through arrangements made with Rabbi Papermaster and someone else to conduct services including a Sefer Torah with the necessary prayer books and other religious requirements.

He visited Devils Lake each fall to prepare kosher meat and fowl for the winter. It required his bringing along supplies of vegetables that the colonists either could not or would not raise on their own land such as potatoes, cabbages, beets, carrots and other vegetables that were grown in abundance in the Red River Valley.<sup>275</sup> For a few years, his appearances in the rural farming area was "on demand and availability" as families called on his services for *bar mitzvahs*, weddings, funerals, or a *bris* (circumcision ceremony for newborn baby boys). Isak Edelman's story notes, "The Jews do not have baptism, but male children are circumcised while female children have a prayer said over them by the Rabbi."<sup>276</sup>

The *bris* was prepared for by making a garment for a baby boy to wear for this singular ceremony. In Rachel Calof's situation she also made a few diapers in honor of the baby boy's coming and dresses for her daughters to wear at their brother's *bris*. The cost for the *mohel* was \$10 for fee and train fare to Devils Lake. The celebration dinner consisted of cheese and butter, two roasted chickens and one of the jointly owned family oxen since the family had not tasted meat during the three years of living in North Dakota. However, to everyone's disappointment the *shochet* found the animal to be *traif* (not kosher, any varieties of discoveries of disease, infection, injury or physical abnormality). In this case the *shochet*, being more modern than most and a good and humane person, ordered Rachel to cook and eat the meat of the ox even though he had declared it to be *traif*.<sup>277</sup> In explanation, according to his interpretation of the Jewish law she was obligated to eat the meat because she was weak from childbirth and needed nourishment for her own sake and as a mother with maternal duties.<sup>278</sup> Rachel had more faith in the Rabbi than what she experienced in her childbearing with the pioneer doctors whom she accused of drunken behavior and brutal practices.<sup>279</sup>

Throughout Jewish history customs in Jewish life varied conforming to conditions and circumstances, communities and countries from which all of them had come. In Russia, the government had interfered with the Jewish way of life. Rabbi Papermaster was accused of being lax in his maintenance of *kashruths* in the homes of the community. He adjusted to the Jews he

<sup>273</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Edelman.

<sup>274</sup> Papermaster, 1959.

<sup>275</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 229.

<sup>276</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Isak Edelman.

<sup>277</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 96. The meaning of *Traif* is not kosher, any varieties of discoveries of disease, infection, injury or physical abnormality.

<sup>278</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 72.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid, Pg. 74.



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served from southern Russia, Poland and Romania who had a Yiddish dialect, pronounced the Hebrew differently than the Lithuanian pronunciation, and had different customs, but drew the line on certain superstitions they brought to America from the old country.<sup>280</sup> Rachel Calof's mother-in-law forced many superstitious beliefs upon Rachel at the Garske Colony. The mother-in-law interpreted the lack of stars in the sky as meaning the Sabbath was still not over preventing her from starting a fire. She brought a prayer book to Rachel Calof's bedside believing it would prevent devils from harming her and her baby.<sup>281</sup>

Rabbi Papermaster began to make more regular visits in the late 1890s as the community began to show signs of permanence in both numbers and fiscal resources. He scheduled special spring and fall visits to prepare kosher meat although some residents continued to have frozen kosher meat shipped to them from Grand Forks, and later also Minot, during winter months. For Passover if families could not get meat, they would eat fish and *milchigs* (dairy dishes). A family was known to keep a kosher cow for Passover, feeding it only grass and potatoes so they could use its milk.<sup>282</sup>

Dr. A. Papermaster, son of Rabbi Papermaster, stated that some of the Jewish immigrants who left the colony dropped their Jewish religion or converted to Christianity and many people throughout North Dakota have Jewish ancestors who were the original immigrants who settled the agricultural colonies.<sup>283</sup>

### **C. Moving off the Homesteads-Economic/Social/Religious Reasons**

The life of the individual homesteaders and their development as persons was influenced by the plains with its harsh weather and living conditions. It tested the entire colony's perseverance, faith and strength. The last of the settlement families left the Garske Colony in the mid-1920s. Nothing remains of the settlement today, but the gravestones in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, which attest to the once active colonists' community remaining as a memorial to the men and women who had first conquered this land and to their brethren in the Twin Cities who had helped them in their labors.<sup>284</sup> Marvin S. Kirk's *A Study of the Jew's Contribution to Land Settlement and Land Credit* gives some basic reasons why some of the colonies failed:

1. They were sent here with no knowledge of farming and insufficient means of support to keep them until they had learned to farm, and could obtain machinery and other equipment.
2. Most of the colonies were in places which were not convenient to market, were subject to drought, hailstorms, prairie fires and high rates of interest. Many of the settlers knew some trade or business at which they could make a living, and since most of them were

<sup>280</sup> Papermaster, 1959.

<sup>281</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 49, 94.

<sup>282</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin Families.

<sup>283</sup> Fields Schwartz, Pg. 229.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

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unable to do that on their farms, it was only natural that they should go back to the cities or to the nearby villages and towns.<sup>285</sup>

Another reason for leaving the farms was the concern for the future of their children. A close family relationship is an important aspect of Judaism. The solitary existence of the sparsely settled rural area was a change from their communal life in the Old World. Even neighboring farms were usually at least a mile apart. The east European Jews were used to the friendly liveliness of town life, and found living in relative isolation from both other Jewish families and educational institutions was a hard adjustment. Never-ending repetitive daily chores filled the hours, but not the social and intellectual needs.

The immigrants had a high priority for education with a chance to enter a professional career and marriage with someone of the Jewish faith. The religious leaders, Davis Rubin, Mandel Mill and Abraham Adelman had made *shidduchim* (matches) amongst their families with Abraham Adelman's family marrying Mr. Rubin's daughter Dora, and another to Mandel Mill's daughter, Molly.<sup>286</sup> It is written in the histories that one or two Jewish women opened boarding houses in the towns and catered to Jewish bachelors as a way of trying to find a husband for their daughters.

The settlers were afraid that the Jewish ways of life would be lost to the future generations if they remained isolated. It would become even more difficult if not impossible for the next generation of farm families, without access to either the formal cultural contexts or social networks to support the maintenance of this heritage. They worried too about the dilution of their heritage and the strength of their *yiddishkeit* ("Jewishness") and the impact of *goyishkeit* ("gentileness").<sup>287</sup> Phillip Cowen, editor of the *American Hebrew*, noted that "of all their complaints, despite all their hardships, the religious education of the young seemed to concern (the farmers) the most."<sup>288</sup> In many cases as the children grew older and left the farm, the parents eventually followed them. Typically, the homesteaders only stayed on the land the required number of years to receive their land patent.

Most of the Garske farmers left their land as soon as they acquired full land title (five years and even less with commutations). The time spent on the prairie allowed them to acquire some fluency in English and a certain knowledge of American political and economic ways. A few individuals moved to Devils Lake and entered the local business world; some even before they relinquished their farms, became pedlars and went from farm to farm and town to town. Many of the homesteaders went to Minneapolis. By 1900 only a few Jews remained in the Garske area and by the mid-1920s the last Jewish farmer had left his farmstead.<sup>289</sup>

<sup>285</sup> Plaut, "Jewish Colonies at Painted Woods and Devils Lake," Pg. 64.

<sup>286</sup> Stories and Family Histories of Sons of Jacob Immigrants, Wilensky and Rubin Families.

<sup>287</sup> Rikoon, Pg. 128.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Sherman, *Plains Folk North Dakota's Ethnic History*, pg. 383.

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Many homesteaders sold the land and used the money to reestablish themselves in Winnipeg, Minneapolis, St. Paul or Chicago where they moved into Jewish neighborhoods and they could have a more familiar lifestyle. Francis Kitsch remembered Louis Gooderman, one of the 104 Jewish homesteaders, as a very kind man who was very well liked and farmed in the Garske Colony area for many years until the hard times of the 1930's when he moved his family to Grand Forks where he was employed at a hardware store.<sup>290</sup> Others entered business through the peddler route. Many of these peddlers then graduated into becoming merchants and operating stores in the area towns after they had made sufficient acquaintances and friends among farmers and settlers in the surrounding territories.<sup>291</sup> In the area, non-Jewish farmers often put-up Jewish peddlers for the night and in the morning fed them fried eggs as a courtesy knowing the peddler would not eat pork. Rabbi Papermaster was a resource for signing or endorsing a note at the banks or guaranteeing credit with a wholesaler throughout the region if needed.<sup>292</sup>

Devils Lake had become a center for railroad laborers in the 1900s, where it employed 400 machinists in 1906, until 1923.<sup>293</sup> A few followed the extension of the Northern Pacific Railroad and established businesses in towns along the railroad to serve travelers, railroad workers and farmers or pursued homesteading opportunities in the Northwest.

By 1927 there were 152 cities in the United States with Jewish populations at least 1000, but fewer than 10,000. There were also a substantial number of Jewish communities in the United States composed of no more than a few hundred individuals.<sup>294</sup> The patterns of Jewish settlement in the early years of North Dakota follow the study of the history of smaller Jewish communities such as Devils Lake.

#### **IV. MERCHANT LEADERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND FAMOUS CONNECTIONS**

“There was a Jewish merchant in just about every town along the railroad,” recalled Myer Shark. Shark’s father, Herman, came to Devils Lake during the boom time in 1906 and opened a men’s clothing store. Herman Shark emigrated from Lithuania at the age of 18 to the U.S. He was excited about the booming North Dakota economy advertised and promoted by the railroads and land speculators. He arrived in St. Paul and began his new life by working in a home furnishings store. Later he became a peddler selling religious pictures. His next job was a salesman for distilled spirits, sold in wooden barrels to drug stores "for medicinal purposes." He married May Glickson in St. Paul in 1905. They traveled to Devils Lake where he had an opportunity to establish himself in a business which would give him freedom and independence for himself and his family as a new American. Herman and May had four sons and they were bar-mitzvahed in

<sup>290</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 1, Pg. 19.

<sup>291</sup> Papermaster, 1959.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Weissbach, Pg. 2.

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Devils Lake at the court house. Through May Shark's efforts, a ladies' aid was organized and a special charter was granted to the group by the national Hadassah organization, despite the fact the group was smaller in number than was ordinarily allowed. Herman Shark served his community in various ways, even as fire and police commissioner. In 1978 the Shark Building in downtown Devils Lake was gifted to Lake Region State College in memory of Herman and May Shark. The sale of the building created an endowment awarded annually to a Marketing Management enrolled student.<sup>295</sup>



Shark's Mens Store, Devils Lake, North Dakota (circa 1940s) (courtesy of Leighton and Dianne Leighton)

The stores of Jewish merchants often bore the names of the owners reinforcing the visibility of Jewish merchant families in their small-town environments. Another common approach to the naming of their stores was to allude to the great cities from which they imported their goods. This gave their businesses a cosmopolitan feel and suggested to their small-town customers that they could keep up with the fashion trends and the standards of the country's leading urban centers.<sup>296</sup>

<sup>295</sup> John K. Norby, "Herman and May Shark Fund for Excellence in Marketing Education." Speech, Dedication of the Herman Shark School of Retailing. Devils Lake. October 4, 1978.

<sup>296</sup> Weissbach, Pg. 101-102.



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Morris Glickson (brother to May Shark) and his family arrived in Devils Lake and opened a Chicago Store about 1907, (also known as Glickson's Mens Store). It became known statewide for its large selection of men's clothing and was part of the Straus-Glickson Corporation, which operated nine stores. In 1910 Morris and his cousin Julius, who had arrived from New York City a few years after Morris, developed a partnership at the corner of 4th Street and 4th Avenue in downtown Devils Lake that gave small-town America one more Boston Store.<sup>297</sup> Ownership continued through several generations and by the late 1970s, it was considered the largest men's and boy's store in North Dakota.<sup>298</sup>



1920 Directory advertisement of M. Glickson's Chicago Store

The location of the Glickson Store was previously owned and operated as a men's clothing store with an opera house built on the upper story by Sam L. Wineman. Perhaps the most glamorous service-oriented pursuit taken by Jews in small towns was entrepreneurship in the entertainment industry. In the nineteenth century, this often meant building and running an opera house.<sup>299</sup> Arriving from Chicago in April of 1883, Wineman "proved up" his claim in 1892 on land in Sullivan Township. He married a Norwegian, Trina Moe, from Wisconsin in Devils Lake June 17, 1886. Their daughter, Lillian, recalled the story of how they met each other, "Papa saw Mamma on the street in Devils Lake for the first time and said 'That's the woman I'm going to marry,' and he did". In 1908 he sold the homestead land and bought another piece of property, once known as the Wineman farm, east of the North Dakota School for the Deaf in Devils Lake. He is not remembered as a farmer, but as a prominent Jewish merchant of the early days who was highly visible and in the hustle and bustle of its town.<sup>300</sup> Operating with the best interest in

<sup>297</sup> Weissbach, Pg 102.

<sup>298</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota, Vol. 1 and 2, Pg. 195, 772.

<sup>299</sup> Weissbach, Pg. 104.

<sup>300</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota, Vol. 3, Pg. 117.

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the welfare of the State of North Dakota and local area in mind, Shark, Glickson and Wineman were instrumental in the state's development and what it became today.

Homesteader Louie Friedman, who owned the Friedman Clothing Store, also became a well-established businessman in Devils Lake. Janet Frisch, descendant of Herman Shark, recalls Louie Friedman worked for Herman Shark for a while and then wanted to buy into the store. Herman told him that the only partner he would have was his wife, May. So, Louie opened his own store in the early 1900s. Contemporary businesses contributed to the economic prosperity of Devils Lake. The names of these early merchants attest to the acceptance of the Jewish people amongst north central North Dakota's population.

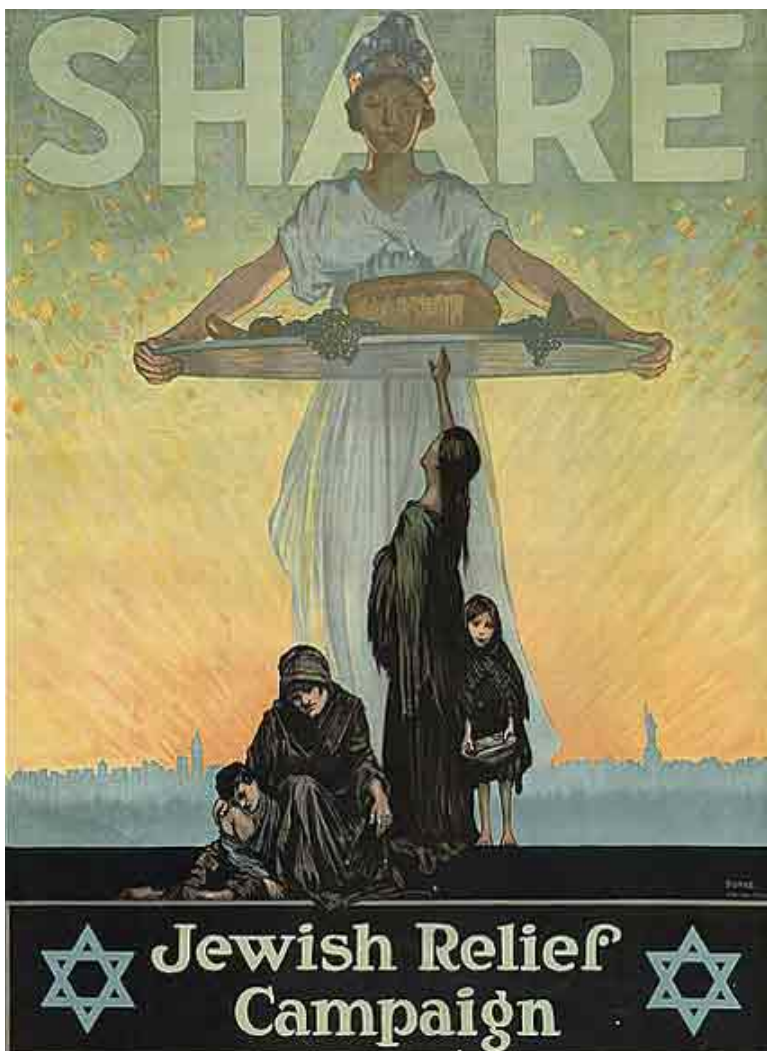
By World War I, a community of about 25-30 Jewish families had become established in Devils Lake. World War I caused alarm and worry over the fate of families left behind in Eastern Europe, a war zone. Rabbi Papermaster organized a group for the collection of funds to aid the stricken relatives. Also, a statewide organization under the American-Jewish Relief Committee for North Dakota served throughout the war years until 1926-1927. Between 1914 and 1924, American Jews raised an unprecedented 63 million dollars for relief of their suffering European kinfolk. Jack Goldberg, Herman Shark, Morris Glickson and Julius Glickson served on the State Committee from Devils Lake.

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World War I propaganda poster of woman with tray of food, poor woman and children at her feet. (source [www.wwlpropaganda.com](http://www.wwlpropaganda.com))

North Dakota's Jewish population reached its maximum between 1925 and 1930 with at least one Jewish family in almost 300 towns.<sup>301</sup> The annual report of Jewish Agricultural and Jewish Aid Society of New York reported by 1927 over 75 percent of the 2000 Jews in North Dakota lived in the state's largest population areas of Fargo, Grand Forks, Bismarck, Minot and Devils Lake.<sup>302</sup>

Although farming was viewed as an appropriate alternative, the Jewish families had moved off the homesteads to the cities to give their children a fuller Jewish life. They had gained social freedom and became successful in other business ventures locally and nationally, even led 'famous lives.' This suggests that for those who took the risk and suffered the hardships long

<sup>301</sup> Papermaster, 1959.

<sup>302</sup> *Jewish Agricultural Aid Society Annual Reports*. New York, New York: Jewish Agricultural Aid Society, 1903 - 1916.

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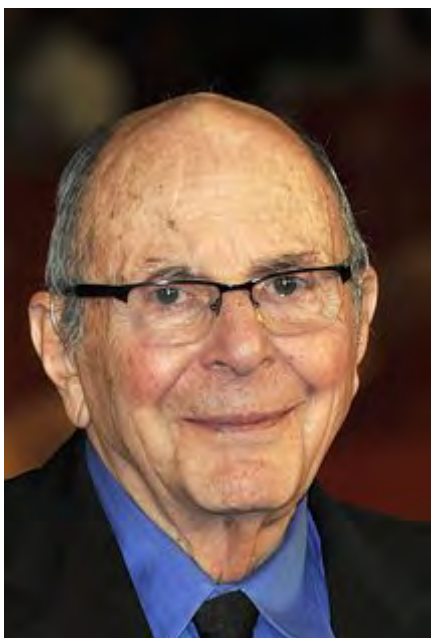
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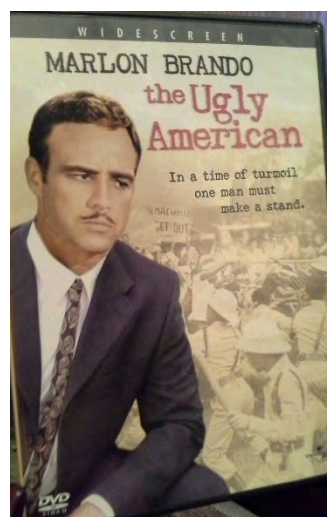
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enough to acquire title to the land, the good intentions of the Jewish agricultural philanthropists were not completely lost.

The story of the earliest Jewish homesteaders of the area appears in *The House That Shadows Built*, a biography of Hollywood film magnate, Adolph Zukor, by Will Irwin.<sup>303</sup> Another involved in the film industry was Stewart Henry Stern, son of Kaufman's daughter, Francis. He was a two-time Oscar-nominated and Emmy award winning American screenwriter. He is best known for writing the screenplay for the iconic film *Rebel Without a Cause*, starring James Dean, *The Ugly American* and *Rachel, Rachel*. His mother, Francis, was involved in becoming an actress.<sup>304</sup>



Stewart Stern (photo source [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))



Movie produced by Stewart Stern

The Calof family memories are documented in a book, *Rachel Calof's Story Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains*. In 2014 'The Rachel Calof Story' was presented in Devils Lake in two sold out performances with over 1000 attending. It is a one woman play with original music based on the memoirs of Rachel Calof. The play is performed by actress Kate Fuglei. It is a story inspired by Rachel's unique ingenuity, determination and humanity. The same Rachel Calof Story, with the same cast has been presented in New York, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Portland and Minnesota Jewish Theatre in St. Paul to rave reviews.<sup>305</sup>

<sup>303</sup> Irwin, Pg. 54-123.

<sup>304</sup> "Stewart Stern Biography," IMDB. [www.imdb.com/name/nm0827856/bio](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0827856/bio) accessed 2016.

<sup>305</sup> Rachel Calof Family Reunion and a Play Starring Kate Fuglei in Devils Lake, North Dakota, June 20 & 21, 2014.  
[www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org).

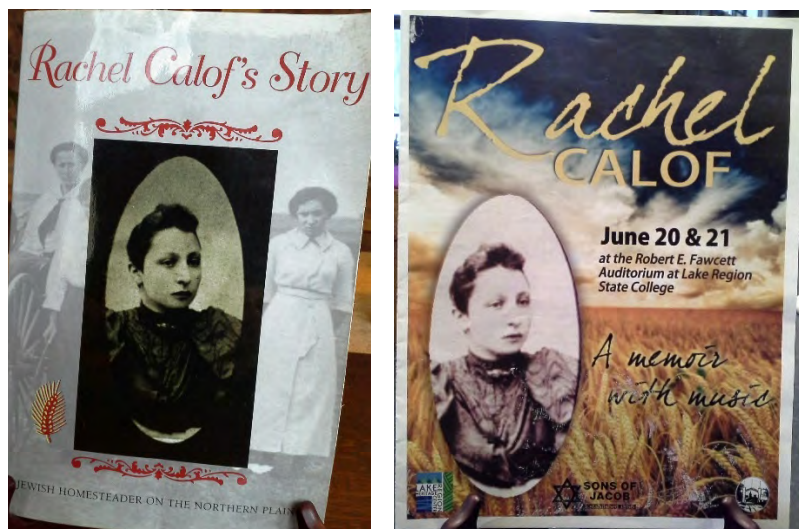


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“Rachel Calof’s Story: Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains” and “Rachel Calof: A Memoir With Music”

## V. LIST OF THOSE BURIED IN THE SONS OF JACOB CEMETERY

The Jewish agricultural settlement was an especially costly experiment for families in which parents lost children because of a lack of basic medical care and being distanced from a doctor (Kaufman baby) or children lost a parent in a prairie blizzard or fire (Mrs. Benj Goodman). Rachel Calof worried about Abraham’s safety during a March trip to Devils Lake and stated many people lost their lives in those terrible blizzards, wondering blinded and lost until they froze to death. The Phillip Greenberg immigrant story mentions bodies found along the trails after the snow melt in the spring. The Ettinger family claims Simon was buried in a snowstorm. With his death in August, it is too early for a blizzard so deep. He may have been caught in an early frost with adverse weather and his death may have been related.

There are 17 recognizable gravestones, 13 identified, but at least 15 people are thought to be buried at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. The known gravesites of those buried in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery with their information follows, and some whose names are unknown, but are with grave markers. Visitor remembrance stones that were placed at many of the graves can be seen in the photos.

In addition to the 13 identified and five unidentified graves, the following are believed to be buried at or near the Sons of Jacob Cemetery:

Joseph Kaufman, Death Date: Likely 1888 or 1890, Joseph was the possible name of 19-month old baby, the first buried in what became the Sons of Jacob Cemetery.

Mrs. Bennie Goodman, Death Date: 1887, In 1887 Mrs. Bennie Goodman was tragically burnt to death in a prairie fire. It was customary to place a stone marker over the grave at the time of burial, but since even stones were scarce in this part of the country, the claim shack

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was placed over the grave. In later years, another prairie fire destroyed the claim shack causing even more sorrow.

Among others thought to be buried in the cemetery from the early Jewish homesteading settlers are those of Herman, Jacob, and Lena Friedman and members of the Calof (Kalov), Sushansky and Kaufman families. Family stories state Louie Friedman's ancestors, Herman, Jacob, and Lena Friedman, are buried in Garske.<sup>306</sup>

When a prairie fire broke out, the neighbors joined in to fight it including one young woman's husband whose house became surrounded by fire. When the danger was realized, she ran through the prairie. Later, the neighbors found her burned body. She was buried in the newly formed Jewish cemetery. (Name, gravesite, birth and death dates are unknown.)<sup>307</sup> The six week old baby girl of Mandel and Sarah Mill (The gravesite, birth and death dates are unknown).<sup>308</sup>

Herman Hoffman is one of the names on the Monument of the 1880s 104 Jewish Homesteaders, Rose Sweed wrote, "I stood at the gate of the cemetery with tear dimmed eyes. The prairie grass was high in the month of June, but I could still see the names on the tombstones: Canter, Hoffman, and, yes, side by side, Israel and Manacha Mill tombstones carved out of stone that would stand forever as monuments to the achievements of those brave Jewish pioneers."<sup>309</sup>

Calof (Kalov) family members, birth and death dates unknown.

Sushansky family members, birth and death dates unknown.

Kaufman family members, birth and death dates unknown.

Israel Mill, birth date 1936, death date 1902. Israel is believe to have been killed by a pair of runaway horses. He was the father of Mandel Mill. It is believed that Mandel was buried next to his father Israel.<sup>310</sup>

Isaac Slemerson, birth date unknown. As told by Francis Kitsch, Slemerson left home one morning in the fall of 1902 with a wagon load of hay and a few chickens, which were to be slaughtered by the Rabbi in Devils Lake. On the way, the load tipped over and Mr. Slemerson was found with a broken neck by Mr. James Nash who relayed the news to the Calof village-postoffice, as that place was known in those days. His carved tombstone is still to be seen at the Jewish cemetery.<sup>311</sup>

## VI. CONCLUSION

<sup>306</sup> Kevin Bonham, "Memories Set in Stone," Grand Forks Herald, September 16, 2006. [www.sojnorthdakota.org](http://www.sojnorthdakota.org)

<sup>307</sup> Sweed, Pg. 6.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid, Pg. 19.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid, Pg. 22.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid, Pg. 7; Dave Robinson, Sons of Jacob Cemetery, Garske, Ramsey County, North Dakota, USA.

<http://www.findagrave.com> accessed November 2016.

<sup>311</sup> Ramsey County North Dakota. Vol. 1, Pg. 19.

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The Sons of Jacob Cemetery is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level, due to its association with Russian Jewish immigrants who with little or no farming experience, became some the first Americanized pioneer settlers on the North Dakota prairie for the purpose of becoming farmers on homestead land.

Second, the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, the oldest Jewish cemetery in North Dakota, is the only permanent physical reminder of the Devils Lake Jewish homestead colony that began in 1882 and became the Northwest's oldest Jewish farm settlement by 1912.

Third, the Sons of Jacob Cemetery holds historic and artistic importance of one of the most notable expressions of traditional Jewish folk art, the art of Jewish tombstone carved stone. This tradition was brought to America by the Eastern European Jews who carved images and epitaphs in Hebrew characters which memorializes death and the end of an art form.

Fourth, the cemetery, along with the uniqueness of the metal markers helps tell the drama and tragedy, success and failure of the Jewish homesteader's experience and contribution to the state's local history in the areas of agriculture, prairie and small-town life. It is our goal to reconnect this memory site to Ramsey County of those who were once part of the great melting pot of immigrants in the area.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_



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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreege of Property** 5

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 14 Easting: 517938 Northing: 5359567

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

From the southeast corner of Section 27 in Sullivan Township (Township 157 N Range 63 W) go north 1500' to the southeast corner of the cemetery property. From that point, go west 1320' to the southwest corner, then north 165' to the northwest corner and return east 1320' to the northeast corner of the boundary.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the cemetery area along with the access trail owned by the Sons of Jacob Community. It is also the legal parcel that has been associated with the cemetery since it was formally owned by the Jewish community.

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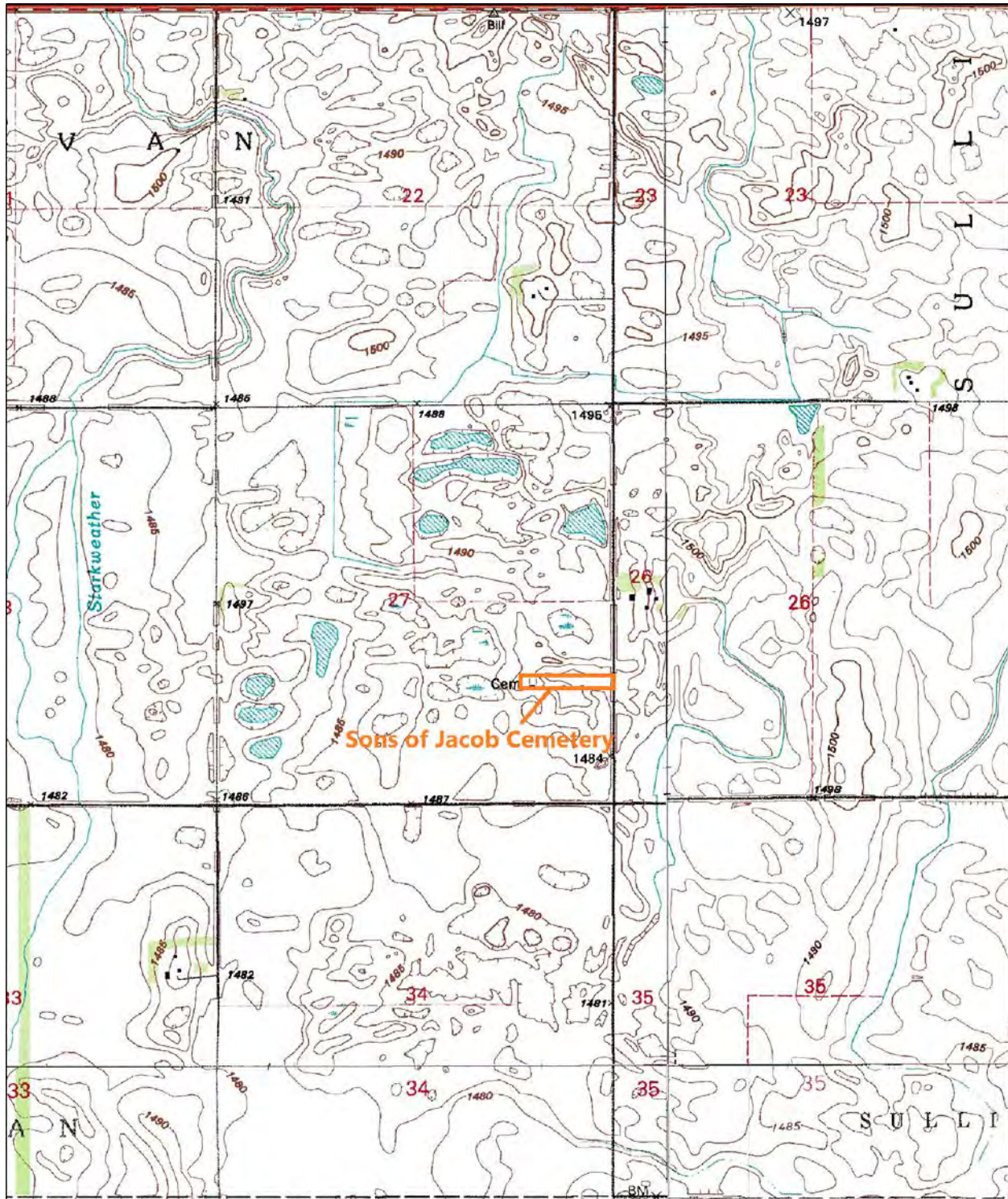
### 1. Form Prepared By

name/title: Shirley LaFleur, Richard LaFleur (Computer/CD Technical Advisor)  
organization: Sons of Jacob Community  
street & number: 700 Eagle Bend Dr  
city or town: Devils Lake state: ND zip code: 58301  
e-mail: shirleylafleur@gmail.com  
telephone: 701-662-8834  
date: December 5, 2016

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**Additional Documentation**



↑ UTM NAD1983 14 517938 5359567



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1. Site maps showing graves at Sons of Jacob Cemetery, photos by Shirley LaFleur



- |                            |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Joseph Adelman          | 6. Unidentified mound      | 11. M. Slumezon          |
| 2. Unidentified fieldstone | 7. John Yaffe              | 12. Unidentified mound   |
| 3. Benny Parks             | 8. Joseph Canter           | 13. Simon Ettinger mound |
| 4. Mandel Mill             | 9. Unidentified fieldstone |                          |
| 5. "Unknown" marker        | 10. Solomon Kalov          |                          |



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 14. Israel Greenberg's original fieldstone    | 17. Charlotte Greenberg's granite headstone |
| 15. Charlotte Greenberg's original fieldstone | 18. Anna Canter                             |
| 16. Israel Greenberg's granite headstone      | 19. Unidentified 1902 headstone             |

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2. First Jewish homestead settlers to Ramsey County, Morris Kohn and Herman Kaufman family, photos and information

### **Morris Kohn**



Birth date: unknown

Death: (Date and location unknown)

Immediate Family: Brother of Mrs. Herman Kaufman (Esther)<sup>312</sup>

### **Herman Kaufman**

Birth date: circa 1856 Birth place: Erdo Benye, Tokay, Hungary

Death: December 8, 1903 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois

Immediate Family: Husband of Mrs. Esther (Kohn) Kaufman

Father of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; John Kaufman; and Joseph Kaufman<sup>313</sup>

### **Mrs. Esther (Kohn) Kaufman**



Birthdate: January 14, 1853 Birthplace: Erdo, Benye, Hungary

Death: October 4, 1930 Place of Burial: Chicago, Illinois

<sup>312</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Morris-Kohn/600000001159041350>

<sup>313</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Herman-Kaufman/6000000008281957388>



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Immediate Family: Wife of Herman Kaufman; Mother of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; John Kaufman; and Joseph Kaufman  
Sister of Morris Kohn; Samuel Kohn<sup>314</sup>

### **Ninna (Kaufman) Deutch**



Birth date: 1874 Birth place: Hungary

Death: (Date and location unknown)

Immediate Family: Daughter of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Wife of Louis Deutch

Mother of Lillian Adele Deutch; Myrtle V Deutch; Gladys Deutch; Kathryn Deutch;

Sister of Lottie Zukor; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; John Kaufman and Joseph Kaufman<sup>315</sup>

### **Louis Deutch**

Birth date: estimated between 1839 and 1893

Death: Died July 27, 1945

Immediate Family: Husband of Ninna Kaufman

Father of Lillian Adele Deutch; Myrtle V Deutch; Gladys Deutch; Kathryn Deutch;

<sup>314</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Mrs-Kaufman/600000008281400012>

<sup>315</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Ninna-Kaufman/600000008282890166>

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Name of Property

**Lottie (Kaufman) Zukor**

Ramsey County, ND

County and State



Birth date: 1876      Birth place: Hungary

Death: 1956

Immediate Family: Daughter of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Wife of Adolph Zukor

Mother of Mildred (Mickey) Loew, Eugene Zukor

Sister of Ninna Deutch; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; John Kaufman; and Joseph Kaufman

Occupation: Wife of Adolph Zukor

She had grown into a beautiful lady, one of the considerations of leaving North Dakota. She was slender, dark-eyed with an exquisite skin and a pleasant wit and plenty of suitors. Because of her beauty she was chosen to demonstrate an embroidery machine at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, where she met Adolph Zukor. She and Zukor were married January 10, 1897 and had two children, Eugene, who became a Paramount executive and Mildred.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Lottie-Kaufmann/600000001115007614>

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Name of Property

**Adolf Zukor**

Ramsey County, ND

County and State



Birth date: January 7, 1873 Birth place: Ricse, Bodrogközi, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén,  
Hungary

Death: June 10, 1976 in Los Angeles, California

Immediate Family: Son of Jacob Cukor and Hannah (Chana) Liebermann

Husband of Lottie Kaufman

Father of Mildred (Mickey) Loew, Eugene Zukor

Brother of Rabbi Arthur Z Lieberman and Unnamed Zukor

Half-brother of Peppi (Pesel) Goodman

Occupation: Founder, President and Chairman-Paramount Pictures<sup>317</sup>

Adolph Zukor was orphaned and at age 16 and with \$40 sewed into the lining of his coat arrived at New York Harbor. His first job was sweeping the floor in a fur store where he was paid \$2.00 a week, soon advanced to be a fur cutter and made double. He relocated to Chicago where Morris Kohn and Zukor met at a business meeting when Zukor was in debt. Kohn was much impressed with the younger man and upon remembering the help someone back in North Dakota had once given him did the same for Zukor.<sup>318</sup>

**Mildred (Mickey) Loew**

Birth date: estimated after 1897

Immediate Family: Daughter of Adolph Zukor and Lottie Kaufman

Wife of Arthur Marcus Loew, Sr.

Mother of Arthur M. Loew, Jr.<sup>319</sup>

<sup>317</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Adolph-Zukor/6000000001115097002>

<sup>318</sup> Irwin, Pg. 71.

<sup>319</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Mildred-Mickey-Loew/6000000001114991494>

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**John Kaufman**

Birth date: circa 1882

Death: Died 1912 in Michigan Place of Burial: Chicago, Illinois

Immediate Family: Son of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Brother of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; and Joseph Kaufman<sup>320</sup>

**Joseph Kaufman**

Birth date: estimated between 1884 and 1889

Death: estimated between 1888 and 1889, location unknown, but thought to be Ramsey County, near Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Immediate Family: Son of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Brother of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Julia Shauer; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; and John Kaufman<sup>321</sup>

**Julia (Kaufman) Shauer**



Birth date: August 22, 1886 Birth place: Devil's Lake, Ramsey, Dakota Territory

Death: April 1974 in New York, New York

Immediate Family: Daughter of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Wife of Emil Shauer

Mother of Melvin Shauer

Sister of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; Frances Stern; John Kaufman and Joseph Kaufman<sup>322</sup>

<sup>320</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/John-Kaufman/6000000001273176391>

<sup>321</sup> "Joseph Kaufman," *Geni*.

[www.geni.com/people/Joseph-Kaufman/6000000001273189464](http://www.geni.com/people/Joseph-Kaufman/6000000001273189464) accessed 2016.

<sup>322</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Julia-Shauer/6000000001114968813>



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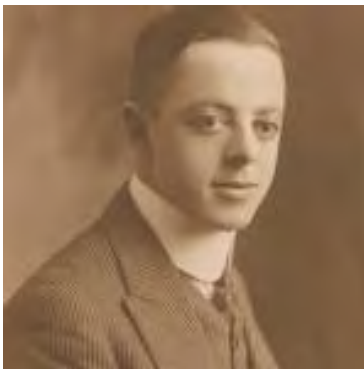
### **Emil Edgar Schauer**

Birth date: 1866

Death: 1933, New York

Born to Florian Schauer( b. 1815) and Anna Schauer (b. 1837). Emil passed away at age 67 at New York. His sister had married Morris Kohn and he was in business with Kohn. He bought the rights for the American Penny Arcade and amused himself by writing hopeful, but cryptic prophecies for the Automatic Gypsy Fortune-Teller machines. If you find one today it is still using the little jokes of Schauer's.<sup>323</sup>

### **Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.**



Birth date: September 25, 1888      Birth place: Devil's Lake, Ramsey, Dakota Territory

Death: April 7, 1957 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California

Immediate Family: Son of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Ex-husband of Rita Kaufman Lowe

Father of Albert A. Kaufman, Jr. and Blake (Lowe)

Brother of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Frances Stern; John Kaufman; Julia Schauer and Joseph Kaufman<sup>324</sup>

Al Kaufman was born in the sod house on the prairie and seemed to absorb the free and sociable spirit of the Old West. Living in Chicago and New York he enjoyed high spirit pranks and joy in school yard fighting, whipping any boy his size. His behavior landed him in trouble and mature relatives used old-fashioned Jewish family discipline on Albert after his father died.<sup>325</sup> He became general manager of Paramount Studios from 1928 to 1934. In 1935 he resigned to become affiliated with the Myron Selznick talent agency. In his later years, he was a real estate developer.

<sup>323</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Emil-Schauer/6000000001114932777>

<sup>324</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Albert-Kaufman/6000000001115064022>

<sup>325</sup> Irwin, Pg. 114-117.

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**Frances (Kaufman) Stern**

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Birth date: 1898 Birth place: Chicago, Illinois

Death: Died in Green Valley, Arizona Place of Burial: Arizona

Immediate Family: Daughter of Herman Kaufman and Mrs. Esther Kaufman

Wife of Emanuel Stern, M.D.

Mother of Marjorie Frances Nussbaum

Sister of Ninna Deutch; Lottie Zukor; Albert A. Kaufman, Sr.; John Kaufman Julia Schauer; and Joseph Kaufman<sup>326</sup>

### **Emanuel Stern, M.D.**

Birth date: October 14, 1894 Birth place: New York, New York

Death: September 1978 in New York, New York Place of Burial: New York

Immediate Family: Son of Simon Stern and Rose Stern

Husband of Frances (Kaufman) Stern

Father of Marjorie Frances Nussbaum

Occupation: Physician<sup>327</sup>

<sup>326</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Frances-Stern/600000001114927147>

<sup>327</sup> Geni, <https://www.geni.com/people/Emanuel-Stern/6000000008281490746>

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3. The following four Devils Lake City Directories of 1909, 1912-1913, 1916 and 1920 give the names of former Garske Colony farm families living in the City of Devils Lake, their occupations, residences and spouses. (spellings as written in the directories)

**Devils Lake Directory 1909**

- pg. 46 Adelman, Herman, wks Fryatt Ice Co. 115 Hill Ave (Daba)
- pg. 53 Canter B, tailor, 717 Walnut St (Frada)
- pg. 67 Goldberg Sam, confectionary, 716 2d St (Freda)
- pg. 67 Goldberg Miss R, 716 2 St
- pg. 68 Greenberg Arthur, mgr. Grand Forks Merc Co, 305 1/2 4th St (Sarah)
- pg. 103 Shark S, pawn broker, 622 1st (Mary)
- pg. 115 Wineman S L, real estate, 601 Arnold Ave (Trina)
- pg. 115 Wineman Miss Lillian, 601 Arnold Ave
- pg. 117 Zunich Hotel (Jos E Zunich prop), 405 2d St
- pg. 117 Zunich C G, prop Home Laundry, 413 4th St
- pg. 117 Zunich Geo, wks. Home Laundry, 413 4th St
- pg. 117 Zunich Joe E, prop Zunich hotel, 405 2d St (Freda)
- pg. 117 Zunich Chas T, 724 R R Ave

**Devils Lake Directory 1912-1913**

- pg. 9 Adelman, Herman (Daba) driver FT Fox, res Arnold Ave
- pg. 9 Adelman, Jos (Mollie) driver, res 717 E Walnut
- pg. 16 Canter Alex, pressman D L Journal, 1 719 E Walnut
- pg. 16 Canter Bernard, tailor, res. 719 E Walnut (Freda)
- pg. 16 Canter Fannie, messenger W U Tel Co, 1 719 E Walnut
- pg. 16 Canter Jake, pressman D L Daily World, 1 719 E Walnut
- pg. 30 Goldberg Abe, 1 718 E 2d
- pg. 30 Goldberg Ike, clk Sam Goldberg, 1 718 E 2d
- pg. 30 Goldberg J & Co, M L Sprung, mgr. furniture; 302 & 304 E 4th

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pg. 30 Goldberg Louie, clk Sam Goldberg, 1 718 E 2d

pg. 30 Goldberg Mary, 1 718 E 2d

pg. 30 Goldberg Sam, bowling alley, 407 E 4th, res. 718 E 2d

pg. 30 Goldberg Sarah, 1 718 E 2d

pg. 47 Liberman Hyman (H Liberman Son & Co), res. Cor 3d & Farrington Ave

pg. 47 Liberman Hyman, Son & Co (Hyman Liberman), 315 E 3d

pg. 47 Liberman Rachel, ironer Swastika D L Steam Laundry, res. 111 E 6th (Rachel Adelman Lieberman was married and divorced from Davis Rubin, 2d marriage, after about 5 years)

pg. 94 Parks Elmer, foreman repair track G N, 215 W 9th St

**Directory of Devils Lake City and Ramsey County, North Dakota 1916-1917**

pg. 27 Adelman, Herman butcher res 111 7th St

pg. 30 Berkowitz, Jake, farmer res. 1012 3rd St (Sarah)

pg. 35 Canter Bessie, bookk'pr, res. 721 Walnut Ave

pg. 35 Canter B., tailor, res. 721 Walnut Ave (Freda)

pg. 35 Canter Alex, printer, 717 Walnut Ave (Sophie)

pg. 49 Greenberg Benj., Justice of Peace, res. 521 1st St

pg. 63 Liberman Mrs. R., milliner, res. 515 Kelly Ave

pg. 63 Liberman Bessie, bkp' res. 515 Kelly Ave

pg. 74 Parks S.A., operator moving pic mach Grand, res. 507 6th St

**Ramsey County Directory 1920**

pg. 3 Adelman, Abram 716 Walnut St (Rose)

pg. 10 Canter Alex B., merchant, (Sophia)

pg. 18 Greenberg Bennie, Justice Peace, rms Sevilla Hotel

pg. 49 Jacob Wolf, ret'd, 715 Hill Ave (Emma)



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4. Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society's farm loan reports and tables

*To the President and Board of Directors of  
 The Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society:*

GENTLEMEN:

I have the honor to report upon another year—the fourteenth—of our Society's activity.

FARM LOANS.

As we have repeatedly stated in these reports, the fundamental activity of our Society consists in rendering financial assistance in the form of loans to immigrant Jewish farmers in the United States. This was the chief aim of those who were responsible for the creation of the Society. It was its primary function at its inception in 1900. It is equally so to-day after fourteen years of evolution and progress. To be sure, the half decade just ended witnessed the development by the Society of a variety of educational and other activities of much importance to agriculture. Nevertheless our Loan Department has more than held its own and has grown from year to year both in scope and usefulness.

The table below gives the loans made by the Society year by year since its organization. A glance at this table will show the uniform progress made by our Society during the fourteen years of its existence.

Year.	LOANS GRANTED.		LOANS CLOSED.		LOANS OUTSTANDING.	
	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.
1900..	39	\$14,425.00	25	\$9,125.00	23	\$7,503.02
1901..	66	31,347.59	65	29,014.80	87	36,820.82
1902..	80	41,517.06	65	33,406.56	150	67,507.52
1903..	117	46,590.51	106	44,006.27	224	99,161.44
1904..	151	63,851.14	125	52,150.44	316	130,968.58
1905..	156	69,864.76	134	56,547.05	386	162,960.40
1906..	154	66,358.03	151	63,836.14	481	208,099.41
1907..	223	140,334.34	204	114,812.07	578	282,494.16
1908..	284	174,633.11	263	160,038.71	710	399,194.07
1909..	256	141,494.48	239	129,442.91	816	478,654.59
1910..	318	209,697.96	281	178,561.55	983	571,103.44
1911..	334	256,000.07	320	237,445.56	1,069	686,657.13
1912..	390	238,323.86	356	218,207.05	1,186	797,503.33
1913..	423	244,977.85	358	207,799.89	1,342	902,649.18

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LOANS MADE IN 1913.

We have seen in the table on page 8 of this report that we have this year made 423 loans, surpassing last year—our record year—by 33. The aggregate amount of these loans is \$244,977.85 as against \$238,323.86 for 1912. The number of loans closed this year is 358 amounting to \$207,799.89 as against 356 amounting to \$218,207.05 the year before.

The geographical distribution of this year's loans is given in the following table:

State.	No. of Loans.	No. of Farmers.	No. of Souls.	No. of Farms.	Amount.
California.....	3	5	15	3	\$2,000.00
Connecticut.....	130	156	780	127	70,963.00
Delaware.....	3	3	19	3	1,200.00
Idaho.....	1	1	9	1	500.00
Illinois.....	2	3	7	2	550.00
Indiana.....	16	16	86	15	11,400.00
Massachusetts.....	32	36	179	27	17,400.00
Michigan.....	14	15	89	12	8,400.00
Missouri.....	1	1	8	1	200.00
Montana.....	2	2	7	2	2,200.00
New Jersey.....	67	81	423	66	38,293.62
New York.....	78	83	430	73	39,249.37
North Dakota.....	17	17	85	17	12,920.86
Ohio.....	17	17	100	17	11,570.00
Oregon.....	1	1	2	1	500.00
Pennsylvania.....	13	14	65	13	7,947.25
Rhode Island.....	1	1	9	1	750.00
Texas.....	1	1	4	1	1,933.75
Washington.....	5	5	18	5	2,650.00
Wisconsin.....	4	5	25	5	4,550.00
Wyoming.....	15	15	46	15	9,800.00
<b>Totals.....</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>2,406</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>\$244,977.85</b>

The above table shows that this year's loans were made to 478 farmers occupying 407 individual farms in 21 states. Besides breaking all previous records as to the number and amount of loans, our operations this year have also expanded

The number of farm loans to North Dakota in 1913 was 17, the number of farmers was 17, the number of souls was 85, the number of farms was 17 and the total amount was \$12,920.86. Only Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts received more loans.

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STATES.	LOANS MADE.		No. of Farmers.	No. of Farms.	LOANS CLOSED.	
	No.	Amount.			No.	Amount.
Alabama.....	1	\$250.00	1	1	1	\$250.00
Arkansas.....	1	400.00	1	1	1	400.00
California.....	3	2,000.00	5	3	1	500.00
Colorado.....	2	1,262.00	2	2	2	1,262.00
Connecticut.....	627	302,889.97	599	475	564	263,559.09
Delaware.....	3	1,200.00	3	3	1	300.00
Georgia.....	3	1,100.00	2	3	3	800.00
Idaho.....	1	500.00	1	1	1	500.00
Illinois.....	16	16,800.00	18	16	14	16,750.00
Indiana.....	32	20,300.00	32	29	29	18,150.00
Maryland.....	8	11,700.00	18	16	8	9,150.00
Massachusetts.....	139	80,213.40	131	105	118	66,188.40
Michigan.....	62	37,750.00	56	49	56	34,100.00
Missouri.....	4	1,450.00	4	4	1	500.00
Montana.....	3	2,500.00	3	3	1	300.00
Nebraska.....	12	8,900.00	12	12	12	8,900.00
New Hampshire.....	5	2,265.00	7	4	5	2,265.00
New Jersey.....	773	521,151.13	643	530	706	463,600.11
New York.....	538	269,608.14	527	427	483	245,149.57
North Carolina.....	1	600.00	1	1	1	600.00
North Dakota.....	422	236,319.14	202	204	389	217,250.79
Ohio.....	100	50,910.00	106	90	93	46,210.00
Oklahoma.....	1	400.00	1	1	1	400.00
Oregon.....	2	800.00	2	2	1	300.00
Pennsylvania.....	75	71,619.25	74	54	66	56,110.33
Rhode Island.....	1	750.00	1	1	1	750.00
South Carolina.....	1	1,500.00	11	1	1	1,500.00
South Dakota.....	32	23,275.00	28	28	30	22,112.00
Texas.....	8	6,843.75	10	10	8	6,843.75
Washington.....	31	14,579.98	26	20	28	12,854.98
Wisconsin.....	18	14,352.60	14	15	15	12,402.60
Wyoming.....	35	17,207.98	28	28	21	7,949.68
Canada.....	31	18,018.42	31	29	30	16,485.70
Totals.....	2991	\$1,739,415.76	2600	2168	2692	\$1,534,394.00

The total number of loans granted by our Society to date is 2,991 and aggregate \$1,739,415.76. They were granted, as shown in the above table, to 2,600 farmers occupying 2,168 individual farmsteads. The excess of the number of farmers over the number of farms is accounted for by partnerships.

The total number of loans granted from 1900-1913 to North Dakota farms was 422 to 202 farmers on 204 farms for \$236,319.14. The total of loans closed was 389 for \$217,250.79.

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5. Jewish homesteader, Abraham Adelman's obituary from Devils Lake newspaper.

**PIONEER RAMSEY  
COUNTY MAN DIES**

A. Adelman, 90 years old, pioneer Ramsey county, North Dakota, resident who had lived in Grand Forks for the past two years, died Saturday morning at the home of his brother-in-law, Joe Castle, 624 Second avenue South, after a year's illness.

Born in Russia, Mr. Adelman came to the United States in 1860, moving from New York to Ramsey county in 1896. He farmed in the Devils Lake region until 1934 when he moved to Grand Forks.

Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. A. Canten of Minneapolis, Mrs. Liberman of New York city and Mrs. C. Porter of Winnipeg; two sons, Ike Adelman of Devils Lake and Herman Adelman of Winnipeg, and a grandson, Alex Lieberman of Grand Forks.

Funeral services will be Sunday at 3 P. M. from the Children of Israel synagogue here with Rabbi F. H. Barenholz officiating.



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6. Photo of Hal Ettinger, descendant of Simon and Sophia Ettinger, and Lay Rabbi Kobrinsky for rededication ceremony at Sons of Jacob, circa 2006. (photographer Leighton Siegel and various others)



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7. Photo of Janet Frisch, descendant of Herman Shark, at native fieldstone marker, Sons of Jacob Cemetery, circa 2012.



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8. Photo of Dianne Siegel, descendant of Chaim and Ida Wilensky and Davis and Bessie Rubin; and Cathy Wolfe, descendant of Jacob Wolf, standing near grave at Sons of Jacob, circa 2012.





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9. Photo of Dianne Siegel, Mike Connor, Leighton Siegel near mounds of unidentified gravesite and Simon Ettinger's grave, Sons of Jacob, circa 2012.



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10. Mike Conner, Dennis Kitsch, Janet Frisch, Cathy Wolfe, Ellen Connor, Shirley LaFleur, Dianne Siegel, Dianne's sister, Ellen, Rick LaFleur, Jim Glickson, Leighton Siegel, Sons of Jacob Cemetery reunion, circa July 2012.





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11. Photo of Cathy Wolfe, Rick LaFleur, Dennis Kitsch, Janet Frisch, Ellen Connor standing at Memorial Monument, Sons of Jacob Cemetery, circa 2012.



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12. Photo of Dave and Stephanie Kalor-Robinson, great-great granddaughter of Solomon Kalov, tracing Solomon Kalov's Hebrew Epitaph, June 22, 2014

## Tracing Solomon Kalov's Hebrew Epitaph

Sunday June 22, 2014, Sons Of Jacob Cemetery, Garske, North Dakota



Dave and Stephanie Kalor-Robinson, great-great grand daughter of Solomon Kalov

### Property Owner

name/title: Mike Connor

organization: Sons of Jacob Community

street & number: 8567 68<sup>th</sup> St NE

city or town: Starkweather state: ND zip code: 58377

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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### Photographs



Photographs 1-3, 5-10, 12-13, 15, and 17 by Shirley LaFleur taken in September 2016.  
Photographs 4, 11, 14, and 16 by Lorna Meidinger on November 2, 2016.

Photo # 1 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0001) View of Joseph Adelman's marker, a metal box-shaped headstone with tin punched name and date, 'Aug. 14, 1907,' on the front side. There is a tin punched inscription of Hebrew on back side which had been blown one and a half miles away in a storm, and returned to the Sons of Jacob. The backside of the marker was put back together as best it seemed to fit, but resulted with the Hebrew upside-down since it was unable to be correctly read. Later identified were the two Hebrew letters, "Peh and Nun," meaning "here lies," which traditionally appear at the top of Jewish monuments. (camera facing west)

#### **MONUMENT NO. 1 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
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Photo # 2 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0002) View of Folk Art native fieldstone of unknown person with worn and weathered Hebrew epitaph, including date and the carved letters, פ'נ, "Peh Nun" on the sides of an image on the top portion of headstone. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 2 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Photo # 3 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0003) View of Benny Parks' monument, a more modern tombstone with an English inscription "In Memory of Our Beloved Benny, Son of Charles and Fannie Parks, Born Jan. 31, 1910, Died Feb. 13, 1910." The site is away from where the other children are buried in the cemetery. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 3 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Photo # 4 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0004) View of Mandel Mill's more modern headstone dated 1860-June 2, 1935, with Hebrew epitaph, including "Peh Nun," visible on the gravestone. At the end of his Hebrew inscription is ת ה ב צ נ ת, which is an abbreviation of the first book of Samuel, 25:29, "May his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life." Mandel Mill died at age 75 and was the last burial at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 4 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Photo # 5 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0005) View of a native fieldstone which was donated in 2012 by an area farmer and engraved with words "Unknown" and the Star of David at the top, to be a memorial for all unknown gravesites at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, located at the base of the flag pole. Note all the visitor stones near the fieldstone. By placing a pebble on the grave, the visitor is helping preserve the memory of the deceased. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 5 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
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Photo # 6 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0006) View of gravesite of unknown person, crude rectangular sheet of tin attached with barbed wire, the grave is outlined by native fieldstones. (camera facing east)

**MONUMENT NO. 6 ON SITE MAP**



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Photo # 7 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0007) View of John Yaffe's more modern tombstone, inscribed in English with name and date, 1891-1918, John Yaffe died at age 27 possibly due to the Spanish flu epidemic. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 7 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

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Photo # 8 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0008) View of Joseph Canter's more modern tombstone with an image at the top of the tombstone of a calla lily laid on its side, and inscribed in English with name and dates, Dec. 11, 1905 and Sept. 27, 1918. Joseph Canter, the brother of Anna Canter, most likely died during the Spanish flu epidemic. Judaism considers a 13-year-old boy to be a full-fledged adult. Joseph, being 13 years old at his death, may be the reason his site is located away from where the other children are buried. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 8 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
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Photo # 9 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_0009) View of 1902 (carved onto bottom right side) Folk Art native fieldstone of unknown person, The Hebrew phrase “Peh Nun,” is located with the image at the top of the epitaph, carved possibly as the Tree of Life. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 9 ON SITE MAP**



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Photo # 10 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00010)

View of Solomon Kalov's obelisk tombstone (note discrepancy in spelling of last name) as the family used a variety of spellings, The tombstone is identified by "Calof" in English, on bottom of obelisk. The headstone includes the most frequently used phrase "here lies." The Hebrew epitaph consists of two descriptive terms "precious," and "Our teacher Shalom;" the deceased's name of the father, Shaul (without a family name); date of death with year, day and month in the Jewish calendar, and artwork symbolism of a standing carved flower visible on the front and south side of the obelisk (most likely worn off by weather on the north side); and a design of flowers and leaves near the bottom of the tombstone.

(camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 10 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
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Photo # 11 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00011) View of M. Slumezon's gravestone, a modern marker with inscription in English of name and date of 1900. The grave is in the northwest corner of the cemetery, separate from the other graves. The reason for the location of this grave is unknown. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 11 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
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Photo # 12 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00012) View of an unidentified burial mound (next to Simon Ettinger's gravesite mound) with six moss-covered rocks detected which possibly outlined/covered the grave. (camera facing east)

**MONUMENT NO. 12 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND

County and State



Photo # 13 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00013) View of Simon Ettinger's gravesite with marker constructed of metal sheet with name and date crudely cut into and attached with barbed wire, surrounded by moss-covered rocks (seventeen detected). The metal sheet's English inscription appears as "S ETTINGR DID" and "The 28." (A former wood plank, once attached to the marker is now located at the Lake Region Heritage Center Museum in Devils Lake, and has "SM ETTINGER 188" carved onto it. Simon Ettinger's tombstone is the earliest marked gravesite in the Sons of Jacob Cemetery. (camera facing east)

**MONUMENT NO. 13 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND

County and State



Photo # 14 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00014) View of Israel Greenberg's and Charlotte Greenberg's native fieldstone and modern (1990s) markers. The fieldstone markers were possibly once encrypted with Yiddish or Hebrew, but carvings have all worn off. The older headstones are in its original site, with the newer headstones placed behind them. The newer stones have Hebrew and English inscription on the front, with name and date (Israel 1892-1903 and Charlotte 1902-1906), and "GREENBERG" on back side of the tombstone. Phillip and Mollie Greenberg were the parents of both Israel and Charlotte. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 14-17 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery

Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND

County and State



Photo # 15 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00015) View of Charlotte Greenberg's Folk Art native fieldstone marker, 1902-1906, The headstone is in its original site, with the newer headstone of Charlotte Greenberg placed behind it. The Greenberg children's original stones are side by side (as are their newer stones). A carved inscription of the Yiddish or Hebrew epitaph is visible, but presently is barely legible being worn away by time and the elements. The year 1906 appears to be visible in the lower section of the encryption. The epitaph is separated from the carved image and the Hebrew "Peh Nun" accenting the area above the text on the stone. She was the 4-year-old daughter of Phillip and Mollie Greenberg, and the sister of Israel Greenberg. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 15 ON SITE MAP**

Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND  
County and State



Photo # 16 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00016) View of Anna Canter's more modern tombstone, with an English inscription of her name and dates 1902 and 1914. The tombstone has four flowers, two of which are upside down. She was the 12-year-old sister of Joseph Canter. Note the remembrance pebbles near tombstone. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 18 ON SITE MAP**



Sons of Jacob Cemetery  
Name of Property

Ramsey County, ND  
County and State



Photo # 17 (ND Ramsey County\_Sons of Jacob Cemetery\_00017) View of unidentified child's tombstone with Hebrew inscription, and English "BORN June 20, 1902, DIED DEC. 4, 1906." The artwork symbolism consists of what may be a palm branch across the top center and two flowers lying on their sides. (camera facing west)

**MONUMENT NO. 19 ON SITE MAP**









אברהם בן יצחק  
ה'תקל"ח  
ה'תקל"ט  
ה'תק"ל  
ה'תק"כ  
ה'תק"א  
ה'תק"ב  
ה'תק"ג  
ה'תק"ד  
ה'תק"ה  
ה'תק"ו  
ה'תק"ז  
ה'תק"ח  
ה'תק"ט  
ה'תק"י  
ה'תק"יא  
ה'תק"יב  
ה'תק"יג  
ה'תק"יד  
ה'תק"טו  
ה'תק"טז  
ה'תק"טז



In memory of  
Our beloved  
Benny  
Son of  
Charles and Fannie Parks  
Born Jan. 31, 1910  
Died Feb. 13, 1917



19  
ה'תרפ"ג  
ה'תש"ג  
ה'תש"ג  
ה'תש"ג  
ה'תש"ג  
MANDEL MIL  
1860 — 1935





UNKNOWN







JOHN  
YAFFE  
1891-1918





JOSEPH  
CANTER  
DEC 11 1905  
SEPT 27 1918



נשמתו

של הרב הנשקם ה  
מאמר אברהם  
בבית מדרשו  
היה לו חן  
ועדין 1964





ביום שבת  
ה'תרס"ב  
ה'תרס"ב  
ה'תרס"ב  
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SLUMEZON

D 1900









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ישראל בן ד  
פנחס גרינבערג  
ISRAEL  
GREENBERG  
1892—1903

משארני בת ד  
פנחס גרינבערג  
CHARLOTTE  
GREENBERG  
1902—1906







MRS.  
OTTE  
BERG  
1906



ANNA

1902

1914



נב'ת'לה טשאובי  
בת'ד פי'נס'נורק  
י'ס'ו ע'ס'ו'ג'ר  
ס'כ' ו'פ'ט'ר'ו'ס'  
כ'ס'ל'ו'מ'ר'ס'

BORN JUNE 20, 1902  
DIED DEC. 4, 1906



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received:  Date of Pending List:  Date of 16th Day:  Date of 45th Day:  Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept  Return  Reject  Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer Roger Reed Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2278 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places  
From: Claudia J. Berg/ Lorna Meidinger  
Date: 17 April 2017  
Subject: National Register Nomination



The following materials are submitted on this 17th day of April 2017, for the nomination of the Sons of Jacob Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.

\_\_\_\_\_ National Register of Historic Places nomination form on archival paper

\_\_\_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination form on archival paper

\_\_\_\_\_ Photographs

\_\_\_\_\_ USGS map(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pieces of correspondence

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 CDs

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 Signature Page

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_ Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

\_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner objections \_\_\_\_ do \_\_\_\_ do not constitute a majority of property owners.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: