

Southern New Jersey  
**SYNAGOGUES**

A SOCIAL HISTORY

HIGHLIGHTED  
BY  
STORIES  
OF JEWISH LIFE  
FROM THE  
1880'S - 1980'S

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MEMORIAL PLAQUE

AN IDEA  
OF

BLUMN BAYUK, RAPAPORT-PURNELL

IN TRIBUTE TO

ALL THE PIONEERS

ON BLUMN'S 100TH

BIRTHDAY

MARCH 15, 1988

"The Jewish Pioneers Lives  
Revolved Around the  
SEASONS and each other"

## The Alliance Colony and its Synagogues

The second half of the 19th Century witnessed Jews increasing in number and population in the United States of America. The first part of this development was obtained by natural generational growth. In addition, the Jewish population was growing due to an increase in foreign immigration to this country. At this time, the American Jewish population was made up of mostly German Jews who were increasing in status, wealth and importance by the time America was celebrating its 100th birthday in 1876.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, turmoil and disorder encouraged by the government of Czarist Russia gained momentum. In Odessa, Russia beginning in 1871, a large cloud of fear for its Jewish residents was finally transferred into action, PROGRAM, the word used to describe civil riots and disobedience was aimed at its Jews.

Murder, rape and sacking of Jewish villages touched many if not all Jewish families in that area. Economic times and poor weather limiting crops added to the rage of the people. This would bore a great price upon the Jews who were considered to be the culprits in the causing of these calamities.

This type of activity would become a trademark of the period of time in Russia when the Czars ruled. Czar Alexander II was assassinated in March 1881. Jewish blood was spilled over this event but this tragedy was not the end. This was the end of the clam that had prevailed in Russia since the Programs of the 1870's.

Alexander III was now in power and Jews everywhere in Russia had to be concerned. Anti-Semitism became allowable under Russian Laws. The age old idea of the blood libels against the Jews were re-enacted in these times. Stories of Jews draining young Christian children's blood and then mixing it with wine for ceremonial practices was a common belief. This was just one of the most rumored stories that the common Russian peasant was taught to believe against the Jews.

Jews hovered together planning what to do and where to go. Russian Orthodox Church officials advised the Czar on what to do with the large numbers of Jews. This ended in the May Day Laws of 1882 in Russia.

Jews who were settled as farmers in the Ukraine in the early 1800's were in villages closer to more friendlier borders. If the Jews could survive the rage of the roving mobs and soldiers, then they could escape! Migration of Jews Westward to European cities and countries took place as an exodus from Russia occurred. Jews fearing more physical attacks in their generation decided to cross the Atlantic Ocean to America.

It is here that the story of the Jewish farmer and his congregation in Southern New Jersey begins. Russian Jews coming to this land in the 1870's settled in many Eastern port cities along the Atlantic Coast of the United States. For many, the needle point trade was their livelihood.

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More adventuresome Jews peddled with large sacks on their backs into the countryside near these cities.

The German Jews were well established for one or more generations here in America by the early 1880's. The German Jews who were now second generation Americans were well organized in terms of local institutions, organizations and self help groups in Baltimore, Philadelphia New York and Boston. Orphanages, hospitals, sick and well societies and large congregations all flourished. Jewish migration in the 1860's and 1870's was mostly German in origin. The German Jewish community took care of newly arriving immigrants within this framework. This noble idea of organization worked so well for the German Jews to gain a sense of accomplishment and a certain proud status amongst the full American population. It was natural for this community to help the first arriving Russian Jews by these same organizations. For all Jews are brethren!

The numbers of Jews from Russia came to port cities with the constant rhyme of the seas. New self help groups financed in part by German manufacturers began to appear generously in this matter. Instead of an individual being helped one by one, now groups of people and their families arrived weekly at the docks of many port cities looking for their futures!

Never before had the German Jews and their organizations had to face such an endeavor. More and more newly arriving Russian Jews stepped off the steam ships in the early summer of 1881. These Jews were different in attire and spoke a different language. This became an internal crisis within the Jewish community. Where to shelter, feed and find jobs for their brethren posed a large problem.

New immigrant societies were formed in all the port cities to handle this wave of immigration. A plan of action was developed by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in New York City. These Jews were arriving enmasse and were different from the American Jewish population. Here the H.I.A.S. agency decided to treat the new arriving Jews as a group. This way, some distance could be put between the German Jews who were Americans and the newly arriving Russian Jews.

The plan to assist these Jews in resettlement became a major focus of the agency. Resettle the groups of Jews away from the concentrated populations of the cities was thought to be a good strategy. Jewish colonies could be established in the Western part of the country. An experiment would have to be developed and tried. Giving the new immigrant a sense of accomplishment would be necessary and agriculture would provide this opportunity.

Southern New Jersey was selected as a trial for this idea of resettlement. This concept was developed but for what underlying purpose?

The constant arrival of Jews from the Old World as immigrants posed a serious problem to the economic and physical well being to the established Jewish community in America

Fear of Anti-Semitism breaking out in this country converted ideas into practice. The economics of this situation were clear to see. In brief, it was more beneficial to spread out the Jews as they arrived instead of allowing them to concentrate in the port cities. This idea in terms of Jewish History has been looked upon as favorable.

This plan would work. The organizers thought that by giving the Russian Jews that now came to America a way to provide for themselves by agricultural means instead of reaping Jewish handouts or taxing the Jewish economic system of the American German Jewish community was honorable. This experiment would provide a sense of pride and accomplishment on the part of both the established Jew and the new arriving Jew. The Baron De Hirsch Fund plan would lead the way in this matter as a model.

New Jewish settlements in an area void of Jews and secluded from the big cities provided rare opportunities. To own land, which was forbidden in the land of the Czars was welcomed news to the Russian Jews in America. Jews here in the American environment struggled against many odds to toil and feed their families plus live their Jewish heritage free from Programs, forced conversions and government persecution.

The Southern New Jersey area was selected as a good place that met all the set criteria. The location was close to Philadelphia and was connected to New York City by the Jersey Central Railroad along scenic parts of the state of New Jersey. Being 43 miles from Philadelphia was perfect.

The organizers begged the government to help. This request was refused. Different groups of Jewish origin pitched in to help. The Alliance Israelite Universelle from Paris joined th effort. The Philadelphia Emmigrant Society was formed in 1884. All these groups joined the effort which was assembled in order to save Jews from certain death in Russia.

It was at this junction that Baron De Hirsch enters the picture. His nobility and wealth was gained from railroad building in Europe lent to his authority and power. Above all he was a Jew! To assist his brethren by directly consulting with the Czar's emissaries failed to produce any desirable results. He witnessed the plight of his fellow Jews and he was in a position to help them. The Baron did this by setting up a program of immigration to America. The Baron set up offices in Hamburg to further his idea of getting Jews out of the Pale of Settlement.

This great Jew had an idea to help Jews resettle in America and turn their efforts towards tilling the soil so as to redeem their widely believed posture of being the middleman. In this fashion, Baron De Hirsch would pay passage to America for Jews who would devote themselves to the soil.

The Hebrew Emmigrant Society cooperated as an agency in America to assist in this resettlement program. Arrangement and contracts of agreements were signed in Europe by 43 families for this purpose. The Jewish families as reported by Elizabeth Colen, the daughter of William Cohn were recruited in Europe. The Jews were signed up for this free passage to America. These Jewish people were married in some cases. They all knew their destination far in advance of arriving in what was to become Alliance, New Jersey.

The fact that the underlining reasons for this venture was rooted in changing the opinion of the local inhabitants. This emphasis of changing the opinion of the local people would be extended to America, too. The Jew must be given a chance to prove his worthiness as perceived by Baron De Hirsch in order to stem the tide that gave cause to the persecution against the Jews and to stop the Programs. This idea was put into motion before the May Day Laws took effect in Russia in 1882.

Only some 20 years earlier in 1861, Vineland was founded by K. Landis, a Philadelphia lawyer and banker. But Jews would be the ones in succeeding to tame the sandy soils of Southern New Jersey some 20 years later.

I. Harry Levin, whose grandfather on his mother's side was the well known Moses Bayuk. Moses Bayuk was one of the first settlers in the colony. I. Harry Levin tells us that the name of the Alliance Colony was selected in honor of the cooperation of the organizing Jewish groups. The area was immediately identified as Jewish by its Gentile neighbors. The native population of the area called this area "New Jerusalem."

Call this area by any name but this area outside of Vineland was home to the Jews that escaped with their lives from dangerous Russia. In 1882, 43 families were counted amongst the first settlers of Alliance. In one year, this number of Jews would grow from 160 to over 400. The agencies selected the people who were to toil in this experiment.

Jewish life was transplanted in Southern New Jersey from the Shetles or small villages of Russia. People were huddled together in camps where Alliance one day would be marked on a map. Finally, arrangements with the U.S. government ended in securing Army tents for the new immigrants. The settlers arrived in May of 1882. This was their initiation into the future as planned by the various Jewish groups that set this idea in motion.

The settlers were crowded into camps until more suitable living arrangements could be built. From this communal living arrangement in three barrack like buildings sprang new ideas to clear the land for farming and to build shelters. The desire to build a synagogue was in the minds of the Jewish settlers from the beginning. The local non-Jewish population assisted the Jews in this task. Streets were laid out and lots were drawn by lottery for each family to settle on. Alliance was officially born in May, 1882.

But Jewish life was in Kaos! These people were not the most observant people. Their one and only religious or learned man was found in Mr. Tolchinsky. This man was the Chazzon and Teacher all wrapped up in one person. These Jews were plain people!. They were simply, Jews!. Baking of challah for the Sabbath was a tradition that was carried to Alliance. Later in the summer of 1882, grapes were picked for the making of Wine for Kiddish. Eventhough their German benefactors had thrust them upon the land, the Sabbath was still the Sabbath! This initial group of Jewish settlers were from Odessa and Kiev. Coming to New Jersey was a dream

These Jews did not opt for the alternative to leave Russia with the BILU. The Bilu, which stood for Oh House of Jacob, Let us Go! Their followers left for Palestine to resettle the land of the ancient Israelites. Palestine in the 1880's was under Turkish rule. Now for the first time in many centuries, Jews were returning to their homeland. New cities would be found in Palestine at this time. They included Rishon L'Zion and Petah Tikvah. Hardships await these pioneers in their endeavors.

At the time of migration to area outside of Russia, another movement would form. This group called itself, Am Olam or the Eternal People. Their aim was similar to the Jewish benefactors of Alliance. But Am Olam was to resettle Jews to the land to farm and therefore actively change public opinion of the Jews. Amongst these Jews were Moses Herder and Moses Bayuk. These Jews were fervent in their beliefs and would live to contribute greatly to the Jewish Farmers Colony of Alliance. This movement was similar to Baron De Hirsch's great plans but the Am Olam was established at the grassroot level.

Even though the energy for this new colony originated from New York City in 1882, it was the spiritual guidance provided by the Philadelphia Rabbis that brought settlers of Alliance together as one unit. The Colony would accept Roumanian and Galica Jews as well as Russian ones. Rabbi Sabato Morais and Rabbi B.L. Levinthal helped the Jewish colonist to feel welcomed in America! This Jewish bridge of help and encouragement spanned the beginning of this great pioneering experiment in Southern New Jersey. Yes, these Rabbis were not tending German congregations in Philadelphia but they were not obligated to Russian Jews either!

For weddings later on and a funeral of a small child at the outset of this historic new beginning meant that Rabbi Sabato Morais was called from Philadelphia some 40 to 50 miles away. This trip would amount to a two day trip by stagecoach and train. Rabbi Isaac Lessor, if he had lived would have found a wealth of human anxiety waiting to be planted. For Rabbi Lessor wrote in his newspaper, the Occident of agriculture as the way to transplant Jewish ideas into the American soil. German Jews did not become farmers in America in 1860's and 1870's because physical attacks in their homeland did not approach the magnitude of the Russian Programs.

The fact that these Jews could have been absorbed and integrated into Philadelphia's Russian Colony in Port Richmond or the Russian Colony in Trenton further up the Delaware River was passed over in perspective. These group settlements were started in the 1870's after the first Program broke out in Odessa in 1871. The Jewish groups who organized this pioneering effort also pushed aside the fact that these Jews were morally prepared to adhere to the Jewish religion in terms of ritual and practice.

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The idea to resettle Jews by other Jews to a land not properly prepared ahead of time was an insensitive proposition! The Jews fleeing Russia thought it was better to try this of life rather than stay in their motherland. Some Jews were not outfitted to do this type of work. Upon arrival and a short stay upon the land would witness the departure of these Russian Jews to other cities. There were other Russian Colonies in the region. After they heard the news about the who lived there meant a future. Still others went to peddle in the countryside. Some settlers tried this experiment and thought it was a failure. They would later return to Europe! But the majority of the settlers who came to Alliance decided to make it work!

The synagogue became their hope and salvation. A congregation was created soon after the Russian Jews as settlers arrived in the wilderness and swamps of Southern New Jersey in May 1882. The group organized a congregation and named themselves, Eben Ha Ezer. The name in Hebrew translates into, "Rock of Deliverance." Even though the soil was sandy, these Jews did not give up their vision of the future and their faith in one G-d! Shortly after the arrival to Alliance was the observance of the Jewish Holiday of Shavous. This is the festival whereby Jews commemorate the giving of the Torah to Moses by G-d. This spiritual celebration could only help to reassure the Russian Jews of good things to come in America if only would follow G-d's word.

Moses Bayuk and Eli Stavitsky who helped the Agencies look for the area brought with them religious knowledge and training. These men settled here attesting to their strong beliefs in their future as agriculturalists. Together with Isaac Krassenstein came a Shas or 70 complete books of laws and higher Jewish knowledge that is central to any Jewish community. This material was brought to Alliance. The fact that these books were brought to the colony at such an early time attested to the permanent character and commitment of the settlement itself! These books were printed in Hebrew and Russian. Books of Hebrew Law were being printed in Russia even as the Jews began a mass exodus from that country in 1882.

Eli Stavitsky brought a sefer Torah to the community when he arrived. A Chevra Kaddisha or Jewish Burial Society was organized immediately as Alliance was formed. This traditional Jewish burial society tends to the deceased according to Jewish Law and ritual. The first president of the group was Mr. S. Helig.



One of the three barracks initially built remained after the houses for the Jewish settlers were built. This building would serve as a sanctuary whereby all the Jewish pioneers could fit under one roof and give thanks to G-d for their first Rosh Ha Shannah and Yom Kippur in America free from the Cza

By the conclusion of the High Holidays of 1882 in the Alliance Colony, a milestone was surpassed. After five months in this wilderness, the Jewish colonist's houses were readied. All the houses were built the same. The house consisted of a room and an attic which served as a bedroom. A low pit served as a well of pure cold water. In this cellar, food was kept to remain cold and fresh. Chopping wood for a fire was the way in which the Colonists kept warm until Spring would arrive in 1883. Chick peas were a main source of protein and was grown by the Jews in that first season. Moses Freeman, the writer of the book describing life in the colony was a colonist in 1884 himself. Later in 1886, Moses Freeman would turn in his deed to his house for \$ 10 in cash and he would take a job in a wool mill. Two years in the bushes and the cold plus near starvation from hunger ended his pioneering days. Moses Klein with first hand experience became an agent for the Philadelphia Emmigrant Society. Moses Klein later published a fact finding of the Colonies in Southern New Jersey and their needs in 1889.

Moses Klein writes, " that he is not here to write a history ." When Alliance will have passed through all the varied stages of development, it will be the task of the historian to work out the subject in all its bearing". Moses Klein's book, " Migdal Zophim " translated from the Hebrew to mean " the Watch Tower " was the most complete report that exists on conditions in the Colonies as they were happening in the 1880's.

Another book published in Philadelphia in 1930 by Moses Freedman in Yiddish entitled, " Fifty years of Jewish Life in Philadelphia 1879 - 1929 " was a popular text at the time. His first writing's reached Russian Jews in St. Petersburg, Russia about the harsh realities of life in the wilderness and swamps of Southern New Jersey in 1886.

By Chanukah on December 13,1887, the Alliance Colony rejoiced in their new synagogue building. The start of a great era was about to occur. The corner stone was dedicated in a ceremony with much pomp and fare. The synagogue itself became known as the Emanu-El Synagogue. Its brick foundation also symbolized a strong beginning in a new land. Its high steps reminded everyone in the climb upward in ones daily life to meet the rigors of Agricultural life! For some odd reason that can be verified with old photographs there never seemed to be any railings leading up to the sanctuary doors itself. One is led to believe that each Jew must balance his daily life with religion if he is to succeed and thus climb the ladder of Life

The Synagogue was the community place of religious affairs. There was more to this building than just allowing prayers to be heard sounding out from its walls on Saturday mornings. Important news was spread far and wide from this beacon in the wilderness. But Emanu-El was the first Synagogue in Southern New Jersey to encompass religion as its basis and also allowing wedding receptions to occur in its midst. Important dignitaries would come to this Synagogue to speak on topics of the day! Political as well as social clubs would co-exist within such a setting. This synagogue then came to symbolize the hopes and desires of all the Colony's inhabitants. This building became the first Jewish Community Center in Southern New Jersey. Thus by the early 1890's, due to its uniqueness within an experiment of this nature and all of its activities under one roof, a Jewish community was stabilized

By 1890, 200 children were living in the alliance Colony. New movement toward work or other types of labor as opposed to 100% agricultural endeavors was opened to the Jewish Colonist. Brotmanville was laid out as an extension of the Alliance Colony within a few short years by 1892.

Jews in the Alliance Colony came to rely on each other for emotional and social contact to combat their new frontier. Lack of money made this even more of a normal adjustment. Each Colonist bolstered the other Colonist in terms of survival and encouraged the continued efforts at settlement in the wilderness.

New groups were formed as needs of the community increased. They included the incorporation of the Chevra Kaddisha or Jewish Burial Society in 1891. The Alliance Cemetery was incorporated in 1893 and the Alliance library was incorporated in 1894. These institutions formed as the community internalized its efforts to get through the years where immigration to the Colony was the least! This was attributed largely to the great Depression in America during 1893 where economic activity stopped the flow of new settlers to America and especially to Alliance.

The synagogue was tied to the well being of the Colony. It was not until more than five years after the founding of the Alliance Colony that the settlement was set on a sound financial footing that a synagogue was built!

By July 29th, 1888 the Emanu-El Synagogue was dedicated. A \$ 500 donation was contributed by a benefactor of the Colony and this represented a substantial amount of money towards the synagogue. Jacob H. Schiff of New York City contributed the money to the congregation. One half of the money was earmarked towards the establishment of a library and \$ 100 represented a donation by Mr. M. Mendel.

The Jewish Exponent of Philadelphia referred to this synagogue as Emanu-El. But the Colonists called themselves congregation Eben Ha Ezer. In this way, the synagogue building itself had a proper name.

Religion was a matter of priority. Physical survival was an all important function and activity in the Colony. But Jewish Farmers lived a Jewish life! Even though their lives did not revolve the synagogue on a daily basis. But Jewish life for these people did revolve around the synagogue. Shabbas was observed in the home and at the synagogue. Yontav was observed in the home and at the synagogue. Simchas were honored in the home and at the synagogue. Jewish existence in the Colony was connected by practice in the home and ritual in the synagogue.

The synagogue itself was built on ground adjacent to the Steinberg property off Isaac Avenue near Henry Avenue. For many years, David Steinberg would remain as the synagogue's president well into the 1910's. This was a labor of love that was not passed onto the next generation.

One of the prominent families in the Alliance Colony was that of William Cohn. Elizabeth Colen , their daughter tells the story. Her father was born in Burachrest, Romania. William's father died at an early age. William's mother remarried and moved to Odessa. There the family became tobacconists. Elizabeth's mother's family ( Salinsky ) lived in a small village in the Pale of Settlement. Fruma and Solomon Salinsky were prosperous. Solomon was a lessor of property from a Lord. This included an orchard, mill, geese and a limekiln. There was no rain for several months and the family could not use the mill so Solomon shut it off. In the mill, he stored grains of his own and grains belonging to the surrounding farmers. Solomon would ground their grain at the mill. The lack of water stopped the operation of the mill that depended on the water level in order for the machinery to turn.

Elizabeth's mother as a little girl was always curious and active. The little girl had noticed bubbles coming up from the ground at the mill. No impending storm was in the sky. She told her father, Solomon of what she had witnessed at the mill. But Solomon paid no attention to the chatter of the small child.

Elizabeth's grandfather would kick himself for not thoroughly investigating this observation. The water gates at the mill were locked shut! Later that night, the waters from up North flowed down to this village and rushed into the mill. The mill was destroyed. All the grain was lost due to the water gates being locked. The scene was so unbelievable that there were fish swimming in what had once been the streets of the village. The water was two or three deep.

No insurance was obtainable in those days for this tragedy. Mr. Salinsky was duty bound to the Lord of the Manor. Solomon would have to repay the farmers whose grains were ruined.

Solomon Salinsky traveled to Warsaw in search of work and business to help repay his debt. While there, Solomon heard by word of mouth about Baron De Hirsch's offer to go to America. Solomon decided to take advantage of the offer and he left for the new world. Mr. Salinsky's brother had immigrated to America in 1867 to escape conscription into the Czar's Army.

Solomon left Russia and took his wife, Fruma plus another brother along to America. But he left his mother in Russia for a different reason. Solomon's aim was to settle in America and earn enough money to pay for his unfortunate debts to the Lord.

Solomon came to America once before in 1878 and stayed with his older brother in Brookwood, North New Jersey. He would stay in America for two years and later returned to Russia with money in hand to repay his debts.

Solomon repaid his debts and traveled to Warsaw for business dealings again after returning from America. Talk on the street was aimed at resettling Jews in America to become farmers. It was a good offer. One would have to sign a contract for free passage to America and settle on 14 acres of wooded land in Southern New Jersey. An agreement was signed in Hamburg with the agents of the Baron De Hirsch Fund. Solomon would bring his mother and brother this time to America. A horse, a cow, and some money to build a three room house was included in the deal to become a tiller of the soil in America as a Jew!

More families joined Solomon Salinsky in this journey. They all knew where they were headed towards in the new world. Castle Garden was the port of entry in New York Harbor. The German Jews resented these new foreigners in 1882. As the newly arriving immigrants were leaving the ship, a German Jew came at the foot of the gang planks and topple all hats that these Jews were wearing. This person proclaimed to Elizabeth's relatives, " You are now in America, we don't eat with our hats on! "



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The Salinsky's made it to America in good time. Elizabeth's mom was shuffled off to the well-to-do uncle in New York City where she could live in luxury. But Elizabeth's mother could not allow her parents to struggle in the swamps and wood lands of Southern New Jersey! Elizabeth's mother rejoined her parents in this new pioneer settlement soon to be named Alliance.

It was to be the perfect spot to meet one's future spouse. Elizabeth's mom came to Alliance and immediately started to help her parents get situated. As she was white washing her parent's home, William Cohn notices her as a beautiful girl nearby. This girl was the only blonde hair person in the Colony of marrying age. William Cohn who was 19 years old at this time came looking for Mr. Salinsky who was at work in the fields. William asked Mr. Salinsky's permission to marry his daughter that hot summer day. Elizabeth's mother had overheard the conversation and said out loud that she did not even like William Cohn! She did not even know him and would not marry him!

But time changed the attitude of the couple and they were married in 1884. Most of the newly arriving people were married on the other side.

The Salinsky's were ultra-orthodox. The women did not comb their hair on the Sabbath. If a non-Jew was not around to build a fire, the family would eat only cold food on the course of the Sabbath. The Cohn family was not as religious. William Cohn was a graduate of a Gymnasium or school in Europe. William was a proficient linguist. He knew how to speak 8 languages fluently. Elizabeth's mother spoke only Yiddish in the home. When the children came back from school she would not answer them at all. She would say in Yiddish, " I know you will be able to speak English but I don't want you to forget your Yiddish."

William Cohn was not religious but he was very learned in Hebrew. He could read the Torah very well. William became the Gabbai for the Alliance Synagogue. Elizabeth's maternal grandfather, Mr. Salinsky had always commented that her father, William had a blessing in his Hebrew knowledge. If only he would utilize it! Mr. Salinsky was on his death bed in the 1890's and took William by the hand and said, " A good Hebrew education shouldn't be wasted and that he shouldn't squander this wealth." A promise was exacted from Mr. Salinsky that William should also become an observant Jew! William Cohn would live to become a more observant Jew than Elizabeth's mother in the years to come until he passed away.

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To William, a promise was a promise. No written guarantee was necessary but he took your hand and that sealed the agreement. The seal of the Mogen David on the Synagogue's literature was inspired by William Cohn because he felt this way. The Mogen David would encompass a handshake or an agreement and would be honored in this fashion.

The Cohn's were Tobaccinists in the old country. William's parents taught the Bayuk's the tobacco business and this turned out to be very successful for them here in America. This was a blessing in disguise. For William developed asthma and left the tobacco business to the Bayuk brothers. They in turn made the business into the world famous Phillies cigar brand.

William Cohn switched his energies into building. He helped to build the new synagogue in Alliance. The synagogue was financed with a mortgage by Baron De Hirsch. The benefactor who invested in this Colony with bricks and mortar.

The survival of the community was tied into the survival of this pioneer group. This was reflected in all activities which originated at the synagogue. This included social activities, too. The synagogue was the central institution in the community. This was the network that meant so much for each congregant who lived in the total community and depended upon each other for moral support.

When Jacob Greenblatt came to Alliance in the 1890's, he started to assist William Cohn in building the physical community. This partnership was crucial to the actual and spiritual development of the community.

William Cohn would become a part benefactor and owner in the Alliance Shul. William had a deed to the synagogue to state this fact.

Elizabeth Cohn was born in 1903. The Cohn sisters did not attend cheder in Alliance. After school, the Cohn sisters would go to a Rabbi's home in Brotmanville for religious instruction. Rabbi Schwartz taught the girls their Yiddishkeit in this manner.

At the turn of the century, William Cohn would move into Brotmanville. He would live on the other side of Jacob Greenblatt. Brotmanville was growing. William would help to build the Brotmanville synagogue. His deed to the Alliance Synagogue was for an intended purpose to help upkeep and maintain a place of worship for the newly arriving East Europeans coming to the community. By 1902, William had helped to construct the Brotmanville shul and now he held dual membership that spanned both congregations.

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The pioneering generation helped to make the Alliance synagogue a wonderful place to attend. Political rallies were held here. Social activities were held in the downstairs auditorium. The Yiddish actors would perform here and bring Yiddishkeit to the country. Professor Louis Mounier would bring Americanism to the doorsteps of the Jewish Colonists. He would try to bring the Jew out of the Shetle and into the 20th Century. The professor even helped with scientific ventures by measuring the temperature of the Willow Grove stream on the way to Norma as industrial waste took place.

Alliance was changing. Non-Jews lived in the community, too. Ann ( Lovrez ) Levan was one such person in Alliance. She was born to John and Fannie Lovrez in the early 1900's in Alliance. Her neighbors included Sidney and Esther Bailey, the Spain's and the Rothman's. Ann went to school in Alliance. Her parents came from Yugoslavia and they spoke German. Mrs. Bailey offered to teach young Ann how to speak Yiddish but she could understand the language of the Jews because of her own background. For school, the children would learn by Mrs. Rose Steinberg of Norma. Ann's family was the only non-Jewish one that farmed in the Alliance Colony. They were Catholic and went to Union Grove for religious services. For the summers, Ann would go to Fannie Abromowitz who lived near the Hirsch Hotel.

Change in Alliance in the 1920's, meant that the crops would have to be picked by different people other than Jews. Black families from the South came North and settled in Alliance for the season. These people were very friendly and everyone knew each other by their first names.

The move to the cities by the country born Jews was taking place in drastic numbers in the 1920's. Bridgeton, Vineland and Millville witnessed an influx of the pioneer's children from the farmlands at this time.

The Alliance Synagogue fell into a state of disuse. In the early 1920's, Jacob Crystal was the last president of the synagogue. Jacob sold the Alliance synagogue's land. The Torah and religious artifacts were sent to the synagogues in Brotmanville, Bridgeton and Vineland. Harry Rothman won a low bid to demolish the synagogue. Thus the land that held a special meaning to the pioneers that risked their lives to come to America was returned to the original state of being. That was a barren and used piece of land! This was done by no accident. The will and the constitution of the Synagogue was so constructed to declare that the building would be torn down if not used as a Jewish place of worship. This is the first example of this tradition that was brought over by the Jews of the old world to be put into effect in the Greater Delaware Valley. This took place in the 1920's.



It was Moses Bayuk who scouted out the area in New Jersey with Moses Herder ahead of time for the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society and Baron De Hirsch. Once the men became settled in the area they formed a different opinion on how a place of Jewish worship should be conducted. This in turn led to plans for a new congregation in 1888.

Just as the new cornerstone for the Emanu-El synagogue was being put into place in 1888, the Tifereth Israel congregation in Alliance was formed. The Emanu-El synagogue would be completed in 1889 and would serve as a beacon to the wilderness. That synagogue would be the tallest building for miles around.

By 1889, 13 deaths were recorded and interned in the new Alliance Hebrew Cemetery. This included 4 adults and 9 children. Thirty-two marriages had been performed in the Colony over the years since its founding.

But by this time in 1889, the new synagogue could not encompass all the ritual and substance of the various regions from which these newly settled Jews originated. The Bessarbia Jews had their style of davening as compared to the Odessa Jews. The Jewish immigrant brought his concept of his Shetle Shul with him to America.

The idea that the colonist became transplanted in body did not necessarily mean a match for his soul. America would challenge the concept of the Shetle shul. This was reflected in different practices and ritual as reflected in the American wilderness. All Jews in the Alliance Colony could not subscribe to one way of forefilling his Jewish spiritual needs.

A second generation would focus in on particular needs of the newly arriving immigrants to Alliance and help to fill a need amongst the older Colonist. In Europe, a community center such as Eben Ha Ezer was non-existent. The shul was just that, i.e. only a shul or a place of worship. A hall, a Talmud Torah, a Benevolent society and a chevra Kaddisha were all separate and not under one roof. The organizer of the second congregation were all Am Olamers. The Am Olam was a Jewish organization that was founded in Russia. The aim of the Am Olam or the People of the World were working very hard to restore the good name of Israel. In this fashion, the congregation was named Tifereth Israel or the Splendor of Israel. Am Olam's objective was not to create a new Jewish state for Jews only a new mental state. A sense of pride and accomplishment were a final result of this people's thinking. At the base of their thought was a common urge to toil and feed their families and live their Jewish heritage free from pogroms.

By 1889, Alliance had grown to over 200 families. Expansion of the settlement was on the horizon. Alliance attracted new Jewish families and the settlement could not appeal to all religious views through only synagogue.

Moses Bayuk, whose father was a Vilna Gaon was well aware of this fact. The more religious element had wanted a shul closer to where they lived. The Isaac Avenue Shul or Emanu-El was clearly too far to walk to on the Sabbath.

The second congregation would form after the successful accomplishment of financial stability settled in during 1887 in Alliance. The Colony was well on its way to becoming successfully independent due to this development. Abundant crops and their market value made for a more stable community.

The first officers chosen were Simha Luborsky as President, Lazar Perskie as Treasurer and Isaac Krassenstein as its Secretary.

But why a second synagogue? Moses Klein, who authored the booklet, the Watch Tower in 1889 about the condition of the Colonies proposes that Tifereth Israel built a synagogue in order to call attention for a second public school to be built in the area! More schools would be built in later years.

About nine months after Emanu-El was built, Tifereth Israel built their synagogue in the spring of 1889. Mr. Zager was responsible for the actual construction of the shul. The Baal Korei or reader of the Torah was Gershon Agronsky. Some 30 years later he would emigrate to Palestine. There he would start the world famous Jerusalem Post. This would evolve into the biggest English newspaper in the community.

Moses Bayuk lived across the road from the new shul. Here in his house would pass many guests who came to pray at the Tifereth Israel Synagogue. William Cohn would help to boost the income of the Bayuk's by introducing them to science and art of manufacturing plus processing tobacco. The families of the shul prospered.

One year later in 1890, the Tifereth Israel shul would take another name courtesy of the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. The newspaper bestowed upon the synagogue, the name of Sharis Israel. This was translated into the Remainant of Israel.

Yes, this synagogue was different in many ways. It was not as large as the Emanu-El synagogue. Nor did it have a brick foundation and exterior. Sharis Israel was built only as a Beth Tefilath or house of prayer. Sharis Israel did not have a Beth Keneseth or a Beth Midrash like Emanu-El. Sharis Israel was built of all wood.

Isaac Krassenstein arrived in Alliance in the late 1880's with a set of the Talmud in hand. He could see that the Emanu-El synagogue was not going to make use of these precious books. Thus the need to house this set of religious books was conceived to sit in the house of worship that was more religious minded. This was indeed the Sharis Israel Synagogue! These men took time from their busy daily work schedules to learn by Moses Bayuk in the evening when the hot sun disappeared over the fields. This was a normal occurrence in Jewish life in Europe but Jews did not own the land there.

The sense of community through knowledge gave rise to new institutions in Alliance. A benevolent society grew from this synagogue and started to serve its members in 1892. A Bikur Cholim or a society for visiting and caring for the sick originated within this group. This all occurred one year before the 1893 Depression in the nation. Some Colonists and observers could not understand the need for two synagogues in one Jewish community. Because the Jewish settlers lived together it was thought that they should pray together. Hebrew knowledge and depth varied amongst the settlers. This difference in religious knowledge was another separation that divided the Colonists into two separate groups.

By the late 1890's, all the Am Olamers had settled in America. The Baron De Hirsch Fund was asked to supply a person to enrich the lives of the Jewish settler in Alliance

The difference between the big shul and Sharis Israel was in their orientation towards Judaism and the Jewish community.

With the appointment of Professor Louis Mounier as Cultural and Agricultural agent of the Baron De Hirsch Fund meant that this division was high lighted between the two congregations. Emanu-El entertained a theatrical group from New York in its Alliance Hall during summer months. Sharis Israel grew more Jewish in its activities or arms of the shul. Where as Emanu-El grew more Americanized in its activities.

Even though Sharis Israel was not built on a brick foundation, it was built on a deeper understanding of the issues that would confront the settlers in the years to come. The fact that this synagogue would outlast the other synagogue by over 60 years was by no accident!

Bluma Bayuk was born in Alliance on March 15, 1888 and at this time of writing lived to witness the changes that would come to the Jewish countryside. Her father's neighbors and friends were found in the Perkies, Levenson's and Heliq's who lived all along Schiff Avenue.

As a young child she attended the elementary school in Alliance. By the time she was ready to go to High School, her father could not afford to pay the tax for her to attend. Up until this time she was a real Jewish farmer's daughter! Her childhood would later inspire her to write a book when she would reach her 80th birthday.

The farmer's children would start school when the family crops of sweet potatoes would be dug into the ground in late September. School ended in early May so that the children could help in the fields. The young adults could go out into the fields and pick berries.

From the age of three years old, Bluma recalls toddling down with her dog at her feet in the fields. This was the early 1890's! Fidol followed the children into the fields. The dog was instructed by Annette, Moses wife to take the kids to the part of the field where their father was working. Bluma would pick plants and clean them for her father

There were three girls in the Bayuk family. Bluma's oldest sister would assist Bluma to lay the plants on the ground. Leana would plant the plant and her other sister, Bertha would water the plant. This was farming by hand!

The rest of her family included a brother and a set of twins who died very young. Deep wells were used for the water supply. The quality of the water was ice cold! The well was 75 feet deep. Many hooks were lowered into the well to keep the food from perishing. This included milk and meat.

Mr. Peterson who owned the cranberry bogs also owned the ice house in the community. He would deliver the cakes of ice for 15¢. You had enough ice to take care of the Sabbath preparations in this manner.

Moses Herder was a more religious man but a less knowledgeable Jew in terms of Talmudic Laws. Moses Bayuk was a philosopher. He would often plow with a book in his hand. The horse would know to go slow. That's the kind of job a horse would want to have if he was a work horse!

On the flip side of things, Moses Bayuk was not as religious as Moses Herder. Bluma would ask her father about smoking on the Sabbath. His reply was that religion was in the heart. When it came to knowledge it was different. Bluma would quiz her father on his knowledge. Why didn't he carry a bible on Rosh Ha Shannah? Moses would answer to Bluma, "the knowledge is written in me." His whole family were rabbis. Moses Bayuk was schooled to be a rabbi in Kiev, Russia.

The Balabitim of Sharis Israel included many Norma people. Amongst them was Isaac Krassenstein and Mr. Goldman. Mr. Goldman's son went to Rabbi Krauskopt's Jewish Farm School up in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

Moses Bayuk was an influential man in the area. He would later become a Judge in Cumberland County. In this position, many farmers came to Moses for advice. The farmers came to Moses for money, too. Moses would in turn write to Jacob Schiff and Moses Montifore Society in New York City.

Jewish holidays were a time of rest as the farm work came to a grinding halt. The shul would be prepared and cleaned for Yontav. The Bayuk home was cleaned from the inside out. Visitors from Vineland would stay over night for the short trip to the shul across the road. The children would participate in this shul! The little children would sit with their parents in synagogue! The little boys would sit downstairs and the little girls would sit up stairs with their mothers in the balcony. Simhas Torah was a fun holiday for the children. The whole congregation would mix downstairs and the children got an opportunity to touch the Torah. The traditional parade in the shul at this time was shared by the entire community.

## Tifereth Israel of Alliance

Mr. Zager and Mr. Krassenstein conducted the services. Moses Bayuk was a Gabbai at the shul. After the High Holidays, the Chazzon would conduct the cheder in the shul. This was done daily after public school hours.

Breakfast for these Jewish children consisted of a hot sweet potato. It was cooked in the back of the coal stove. Cream off the top of the milk was used as butter. It was a very sweet and satisfying breakfast.

Moses made his own wine and sold this kosher wine in Philadelphia for the High Holidays. He would deliver this wine to Mr. Chokowsky at 3rd and South Streets next to the bath house. Bluma would often go on these trips to the city with her father.

The girls in the Colony had pretty legs but purple feet as recalled by Bluma. In season, from spring until winter, the children's feet remained purple. Stamping and squeezing juice out of the grapes for the wine was a tradition in Alliance. Wine for Pesach was made with different grapes. This actually meant a new crop of grapes! This new season would also usher in a new presser or drum that would last the whole year. No mead or beer was made by Moses Bayuk.

A Kosher home on the farm in the 1890's in the wilderness demanded more attention than in the city. Meals for Shabbas would include mainly fish. First large Herrings were bought from the fish peddler who sold the herring for 10¢ per dozen. Bluma's mother would cut the Herring into 3 pieces and the smaller ones into two pieces. She would then pickle the fish in a big stone jar. The larger pieces were cooked. The heads and tails were saved for fish soup or herring chowder. The juice was saved after cooking the fish. Annette would let this cool. She would then boil some vinegar and add some sugar to the juice. Next, bay leaves, onions and spices were added. This then was added to the fish and allowed to cook for an hour. This would last the family a whole week.

Annette would bake a big Challah for the Sabbath. She would bake one for the children. Another one would be flat and one would be round. Moses liked Pipilack. This was a flat dough and onions were placed on top and baked. The onions would come out of the oven very crispy.

During the week, Bluma would make her own cheese. The sour milk was tied in bags on the clothes line. It would drain and the residue of the sour milk would be used in cakes that she baked. Nothing would go to waste in this household. Lunchtime meant noodles, sour cream and cottage cheese all baked together. This was a traditional dairy meal that was very good to taste. Bluma couldn't wait for Thursday's when her mother would make this Luchen Kugel.

These have been all memories since her mother passed away in 1926. In the early 1930's, Moses Bayuk passed away and Israel Harry Levin who was his nephew started to take an interest in the upkeep of the shul. The shul began to take a third name. The newly acquired name was the Bayuk Shul on the hill. In later years, I. Harry Levin would live across the street as he built a new home and started a family.

Bluma would like to see an eternal light over the founders plaque to mark this great beginning. This plaque now hangs in the Alliance Cemetery chapel. Bluma thinks that this is a fitting thing to erect in the memory of the founders. The Bayuk's gave land for the expansion of the Alliance Cemetery. The Bayuk Memorial park is the old Bayuk watermelon patch!

By the 1910's the Chazzon at the Emanu-El synagogue would announce the page that the service was up to for the men and the women who sat upstairs. This separated the synagogue as being less orthodox in its ritual. Some members would now join the Bayuk Shul on the Hill for services.

Even though Reform Judaism could never appeal to the new immigrants in form or out right ritual, its message was brought to the Colonists. Reform and its message penetrated the Colony in other ways. One way was founded in social and cultural programs sponsored by the Federation of Jewish Farmers. Education and culture were introduced to this community in this way. Dispersion of printed material was made available in the Ark. The Ark was a monthly Jewish and English publication. This journal was aimed at the whole Jewish family and their children. This journal was sponsored by the Reform Federation of Congregations in America. Sabbath Schools came directly into the living rooms of the most progressive farmers who could read and understand English. The Chatuaqua Society was the driving force behind this publication. The Chatuaqua Society would later open a Sunday School down the street from the Sharis Israel Shul in the 1910's.

By the 1920's, change set in for Sharis Israel. The bima that had been in the center was repositioned at the front of the synagogue. Shortly thereafter, the first synagogue in the Colony would be abandoned. Its original members had moved to the city and many had passed away. Some members found their way to Sharis Israel.

A new generation wanted a different seating arrangement. A more Americanized approach to Jewish life was taking place in Alliance after the First World War ended. This movement of the bima was not limited to Alliance alone. Along with this change came another one. The Chazzon would now face the congregation instead of facing the Aron Kodesh or Ark.

Even though the community was changing in the 1920's, the Sharis Israel Congregation attracted 25 to 30 men for every Shabbas service. I. Harry Levin who celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in the Sharis Israel synagogue took a keen interest in the operation of the shul. He had been exposed to the Shochet, Wolf Levenson. Mr. Levenson helped to prepare young Harry for his Bar Mitzvah in the 1910's.

I. Harry Levin would become married in 1933. Harry became the official Solicitor and Attorney in Salem County. Harry represented the new generation of pioneer's children who decided to stay in the community. In addition to this group there was a new group forming in the 1930's. The German Jews who realized ahead of time what would happen in Germany if Hitler gained power did not stay around to see it unfold. They left for America. Harry assisted these people in getting poultry farms with the aid of the Baron De Hirsch Funds.

These new immigrants represented a number of traditions from the old country. The German Jews started to come to Alliance as early as 1929.

Sharis Israel began to grow for the first time in many years. slow growth existed until the Second World War.

I. Harry Levin would act as the Chazzon for the Bayuk shul during this time. He would teach Hebrew school at the Jewish orphanage at 9th and Shunk Streets in Philadelphia. Harry was attending Law school at the time. After his return to the community he would lend a hand in the Salem County community by teaching Hebrew School.

This was the time of the Pleasurnik up and down Gershal Road. During the season, the Hirsch Hotel in nearby Eskintown was an active place. Louis and Ann Herschawitz operated this hotel in the country for many seasons. Harry Levin would conduct services on Pesach here at the Hirsch Hotel. This second seder was usually sponsored by the B'nai Brith.

After the Second World War, the Bayuk Shul changed again. The New Comers that escaped Germany were now Refugees. The German Refugees had given up their ritual. Some Polish Refugees would made their way to Alliance. The Polish Jews still had their sense of religion in tack in this community. It was the Polish group that joined the Synagogue who moved the Tabah or readers's table to the Bima. This would eliminate all people from straining their backs to look to see who was present in the synagogue. Change in the 1950's at the shul meant that some congregational members would travel via the automobile to Shul on the Sabbath. As a result, the Norma Synagogue grew by 40%. The Bayuk Shul was no longer considered to be a strictly orthodox shul. Rabbi Abraham Cohen officiated here in the 1950's.

Donations for the High Holidays was left up to the affordability of the congregants. This was always the tradition of the shul. There was no set dues. Aliyahs or honors were auctioned off to the higher bidder to help defray the costs of running the shul. This on done on Yontav and voice pledges were honored in the community at the synagogue. These pledges were paid through the year and helped to pay for the Chazzon in the first half of the 20th Century at this synagogue.

The pot belly stove was a coal heater and it was tended by the Shabbas Goi. The Shabbas Goi was a Gentile in the community who would light the stove before the Sabbath and see to it that it would not go out before the conclusion of the Sabbath.

The continuation of the shul in the 1950's and 1960's was slow and steady. Yontav would follow Yontav with little change in the community. Then came the 1970's. The congregation pass into another phase. The members were getting old as in the previous generations. But this time there were newly arriving immigrants to replace their shrinking numbers. Yes, the ritual remained the same. during Simhas Torah, only the men would parade with the Torah's.

But now the women were getting older and couldn't climb the steps that led to the balcony. Thus the synagogue would allow all members to sit on one floor. The women sat off to one side so as to represent the tradition of the Balcony. The situation in the surrounding Synagogues was the same. Fewer and fewer members were now part of their congregations. Brotmanville wound up with three elderly men struggling to carry the shul before they gave it up.

A plan to mix the Brotmanville congregation with the Alliance Synagogue was offered in this time period after the Bicentennial of 1976. Alternate Sabbath services would be held in the two synagogues in order to have one complete minyan required for Jewish communal prayer. Some Sabbaths were held where a minyan was not present and the Torah was not brought out by the congregation to read. The two congregations exchanged members and held combined services in this manner for five years into the 1980's.

On occasion, the Brotmanville Congregation would bring out an extra Torah to create the number of "ten". This was done symbolically to conduct the services. This then meant that the congregation had a minyan and a Torah service ensued.

In 1981, the Brotmanville Synagogue would hold no more Shabbas Services and closed. The Alliance shul would only conduct High Holiday services.

The Alliance Shul was in dire need of repair of its house of worship during this time. An appeal was sent out to the community for funds. The shul needed a new roof. The floor on the Balcony was caving in and new siddurim were needed to replace the 80 year old ones then in use. Letters were sent to the families who once participated in the synagogue. Repairs were made and the shul is opened on the High Holidays in the mid 1980's.

It is of interest that at the time of this writing, more than one hundred years of Jewish Life has passed by the front windows of this wooden Shul. The Russian Leader of the modern day Russia came to America to talk peace. Mr. Gorbachev is sincere. But even as the first synagogue building was dedicated and opened in 1888 in Alliance over 100 years ago, Russian policies still remain the same towards Jews. Human rights have been denied as they were in Russia over 100 years ago! The only difference now is that Jews refused permission to leave Russia are spiritually and physically imprisoned. But still freedom or Jewish travel, right to own land, and ownership of a profession are limited because one professes to be a Jew! Jews who are refused permission to emigrate from Russia are classified as Refusniks and the new May Day Laws of the 20th Century in Russia take place.

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