Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Lesem



The Lesems were a group of three brothers who were in Leadville briefly in the early 1880s. The brothers included Isaac, Louis and Samuel.¹ Their parents were Solomon Lesem and Rebecca Mook, both from Germany.² Isaac was born during 1847 in Hopkinville, Kentucky. Louis was next, born in 1849. In 1851, Samuel was born in Missouri. Solomon and Rebecca also had a daughter, Celestine, in 1858. Celestine eventually married Benjamin Wisebart and moved to Colorado. In 1877, in Quincy, Illinois, Isaac married Harriet Bernheimer. She was born in Buffalo, New York during 1853.3 By 1880, Isaac, Louis and Samuel had all moved to Leadville. The 1880 census does not show Harriet accompanying Isaac, and she may have initially stayed behind in Quincy, Illinois.4

Isaac does not appear in city directories, but he is in the 1880 census⁵ and appears in insurance advertisements up to January 1, 1881.⁶ Both Louis and Samuel appear in the 1881 and 1882 Leadville city directories.⁷ Louis is listed as a cashier for Travelers' Insurance located at 200 Harrison Avenue.⁸ Samuel was an insurance agent at the same location.⁹ In October 1881, Louis was an attendee of the Simchas Torah Ball hosted by the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society.¹⁰ The pair cease to appear after 1882 in the directories. However, between 1887¹¹ and 1894,¹² Samuel is listed as visiting Leadville from Denver several times for insurance purposes.

After leaving Leadville, Isaac eventually made his was to St. Louis where he died in March, 1928.¹³ His wife, Harriet died in November of the same year.¹⁴ Louis moved to Denver where he died in 1909.¹⁵ It is not known when Samuel died.¹⁶

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¹ U.S. Census Bureau. 1880 Census.

² "Outline Descendent Report for Solomon Lesem." Gensheimer, Cynthia. Accessed June 29, 2017.

³ Ibid.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. 1880 Census.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "The Travelers' Insurance Co." *Leadville Daily Herald.* January 1, 1881. Accessed June 29, 2017.

⁷ 1881 – 1882 Leadville city directories.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "Simchas Torah Ball." Leadville Daily Herald. October 23, 1881. Accessed June 29, 2017.

¹¹ "The Local Social World." Carbonate Chronicle. June 27, 1887. Accessed June 29, 2017.

¹² "Personal Mention." Herald Democrat. July 14, 1894. Accessed June 29, 2017.

¹³ "Outline Descendent Report for Solomon Lesem." Gensheimer, Cynthia. Accessed June 29, 2017.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.