

Lyon

Lewis ("Louis") Lyon

Occupation: Liquor distributor

Born: Est. 1835

Birthplace: Bavaria, Germany

Died: N/A

Rachel Jonas Lyon Occupation: N/A Born: Est. 1863

Birthplace: London, United Kingdom

Died: N/A

Milton William Lyon Occupation: Plumber Born: February 22, 1884 Birthplace: Denver, Colorado Died: January 14, 1923

Lewis Lyon was one of Leadville's most notable liquor distributors and a popular social figure in the city during the early 1880s. Lewis was born in Bavaria, Germany in 1835 to German parents. He immigrated to the United States by 1850, though his port of arrival is not clear. Per the 1870 US Census<sup>2</sup> and California voter registers, Lewis settled in San Francisco where he was naturalized on September 4, 1871. Witnesses to his naturalization were two members of the Hecht family, wealthy Jewish merchants in the San Francisco area with whom he was also residing by 1870. Like Lewis, many of the Hechts were from Bavaria, though the exact connection between the two is not clear.

Lewis arrived in Leadville by 1880, heralded by an advertisement for his first business venture, Lewis Lyon & Co., a wholesale liquor and cigar distributor located at the corner of Harrison Avenue and West 4<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>7</sup> His early years in Leadville were relatively unassuming, punctuated only by reports of injuries he suffered including a broken jaw obtained from a local saloon keeper and a broken

leg caused by a buggy accident when leaving Red Cliff, Colorado.<sup>8</sup> Though his appearances in the pages of local newspapers was rare, Lewis had been making a name for himself among Leadville's elite. The first of many indications of his popularity in town, Marcus J. Waldheimer<sup>9</sup> hosted a birthday party for Lewis' reportedly attended by a staggering 200 guests with an extravagant spread of food and beverages.<sup>10</sup>

By 1882, Lewis had seemingly grown out of his first business venture and began working as an agent for Denver liquor distributors, starting with Lionel Simpson & Co.<sup>11</sup> Later that year he shifted his partnership to Solomon Brothers, obtaining an office in room seven in addition to a connected living space above Daniels, Fisher & Smith dry goods store located at 303 Harrison Avenue. 12 His business appeared to be quite successful, especially among the Jewish community for whom he sold the most tickets for the 1882 Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Association ball. 13 Reports of his popularity continued with a prediction that Lewis would be voted most popular liquor dealer at the April 1st Fireman's Fair. 4 His personal popularity also continued to rise and be reported on by local newspapers, one such instance being a private party held by Lewis at his rooms at 303 Harrison. 15 The event was fairly exclusive due to the small size of his parlor and office space, with invitations likely going out only to his close acquaintances. The reporter for the Leadville Daily Herald unfortunately did not include a guest list but referred to Lewis as a "king of hosts" who allowed Mumm Extra Dry champagne to "flow like water" for his guests. 16 Three months after the party, Lewis invited a Leadville Daily Herald reporter to his newly renovated rooms, showing off his extravagant furniture, wall decorations, wallpaper, and velvet carpets, indicating that his business in Leadville was quite successful.<sup>17</sup>

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1882 continued to be a momentous year for Lewis, culminating in his marriage to Rachel Jonas. Rachel's family, including her mother and two sisters, arrived in the United States by 1870, first settling in New Orleans, Louisiana. 18 Rachel's mother, Elizabeth Eglington Jonas, had either divorced her first husband or he had passed away before arriving in the United States but remarried to John Frank Heiderhoff in Mississippi. 19 Rachel and her family moved to Colorado in 1880 and settled in Leadville in the same year.<sup>20</sup> Though the entire Jonas family was baptized, Rachel and her sisters, Phoebe and Miriam, attended various Jewish social events in Leadville even prior to meeting Lewis. Phoebe and Rachel were first recorded as attendees of a B'nai B'rith ball held at Turner Hall in November 1880<sup>21</sup> and also at the *Hebrew Ladies*' Society's "Pink Domino" dance in March 1881. The Leadville Daily Herald reported both Rachel and Lewis as attendees of the 1882 Purim Masque Ball indicating they were likely at least acquaintances at that point.<sup>22</sup>

Rumors began to spread as early as July 23, 1882 that Lewis intended to marry Rachel, a point which was published in the Leadville Daily Herald's "Personal Points" section.<sup>23</sup> Their marriage plans were announced on October 8<sup>th</sup> and the couple married in a non-sectarian ceremony officiated by Rachel's stepfather, Frank Heiderhoff, on October 25<sup>th</sup> at Rachel's parents' home at 112 West Sixth Street.<sup>24</sup> In celebration of their marriage, Lewis and Rachel hosted a large reception for their friends and family at Germania Hall, formerly known as New Turner Hall.<sup>25</sup> Though most guests in attendance were Jewish, the event was not exclusively attended by Jews. Among the guests was none other than Horace Tabor, perhaps Leadville's most famous prospector and businessman. Lewis and Rachel concluded their wedding celebrations with a brief honeymoon to Denver.<sup>26</sup>

In the latter half of 1882, Lewis became involved in local politics, backing Republican candidate E. L. Campbell during the 1882 gubernatorial election. He became treasurer for The Campbell Escort, a local club described as "personal escort to Governor Campbell." Upon Campbell's arrival in Leadville for campaign purposes, Lewis offered his personal horse and buggy for use by the convention of the Republican party to transport Campbell around the city. Despite the efforts of The Campbell Escort, Campbell lost the election to Democrat James Benton Grant who received 51.07% of the vote.

1883 was the Lyon family's final year in Leadville, though evidence that Lewis planned on leaving the city was evident even in 1882. Lewis' business partners, the Solomon Brothers, posted notices in the December editions of the *Leadville Daily Herald* that Lewis was no longer in their employ.<sup>29</sup> The reason for their separation is not clear, however Lewis had likely partnered with C. M. Schayer's liquor house in Denver by this point, though concrete evidence of such a business relationship does not appear until 1884.

Lewis did not depart from the city before facing some legal complications, however. Lewis and Rachel were staying at the Clarendon Hotel by February 4, 1883 in preparation for their move to Denver. While there, P. H. Riley and brothers Thomas B. Flood and J. Flood, proprietors of the Clarendon Club Rooms, accused Lewis of obtaining goods under false pretenses. The accusations resulted in Lewis' arrest on the night of February 5, 1883, and a hearing the day after. Not a week later, Riley & Flood sent a letter to the editor to the *Leadville Daily Herald* admitting that their accusation was incorrect, exonerating Lewis of any wrongdoing and proclaiming that he was a reputable man. 32



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Held up by his arrest and court hearings, Lewis and Rachel nevertheless left for Denver in late winter, 1883. In Denver, the two welcomed their first and only child, Milton, on February 22, 1884.<sup>33</sup> For three years after their relocation, Lewis, Rachel, and Milton occasionally visited Leadville,<sup>34</sup> typically to spend time with the Schayer family residing in the city.<sup>35</sup> The Lyon family is not mentioned in local newspapers after 1887, marking the end of their involvement in Leadville.

Lewis, Rachel, and Milton were still in Denver by the 1900 US Census.<sup>36</sup> Though Lewis disappears from vital records after 1900, Rachel and Milton had moved to San Francisco by 1910.<sup>37</sup> In 1905, five years prior to their listing in the 1910 US Census, Milton married Della ("Ella") Margaret and became stepfather to her son, Samuel Ware.<sup>38</sup> He

registered for the World War I draft on September 12, 1918, though it is unclear if he was drafted.<sup>39</sup> Milton died from complications caused by pernicious anemia on January 14, 1923 in San Francisco and was cremated at Cypress Lawn Cremation.<sup>40</sup> The funeral home record which noted his death described him as a Protestant. It is not currently known when or where Lewis and Rachel died. Lewis likely never left Colorado and Rachel's last known location was recorded in the 1913 California voter registration listing.<sup>41</sup> It is possible that the two were cremated much like their son which would explain the lack of graves.

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<sup>3</sup> "California, Voter Registers, 1866-1898," database with images, *Ancestry* (<a href="https://search.ancestry.com/cgibin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2221&h=5916468&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675524229&usePUB=true">https://search.ancestry.com/cgibin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2221&h=5916468&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675524229&usePUB=true</a>: accessed October 10, 2020), Lewis Lyon, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California, United States; citing *great Registers*, 1866-1898 (Sacramento, California, California State Library), Collection Number 4-2A, CSL Roll Number, 43, FHL microfilm 977099.

<sup>4</sup> "U.S. Naturalization Record Indexes, 1791-1992," database with images, *Ancestry* (<a href="https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1629&h=5851282&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675524229&usePUB=true">https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1629&h=5851282&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675524229&usePUB=true</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Lewis Lyon, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California, United States; citing *Index to Naturalization in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California*, 1852- ca. 1989, NARA microfilm publication M1744 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), microfilm roll 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "United States Census, 1900," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<a href="https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M311-L7Y">https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M311-L7Y</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Lewis Lyon, Precinct 2 Denver city Ward 7, Arapahoe, Colorado, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50, sheet 5B, family 121, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "United States Census, 1870," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<a href="https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MN6R-YMD">https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MN6R-YMD</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Lewis Lyon in household of Isaac Hecht, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California, United States; citing NARA microfilm publication M593 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), FHL microfilm 545,581.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Death of Isaac Hecht, (San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Call) August 30, 1895, P7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "United States Census, 1870," Lewis Lyon in household of Isaac Hecht.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Lewis Lyon & Co., (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) June 27, 1880, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Leadville Laconics, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) November 2, 1881, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> For more on the Waldheimer family, see: Bill Korn, *Waldheimer* (Leadville, CO: Temple Israel Foundation, ), 2012: <a href="http://www.jewishleadville.org/waldheimer.html">http://www.jewishleadville.org/waldheimer.html</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> From His Friends, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Weekly Democrat) November 26, 1881, P5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> T. B. Corbett and J. H. Ballenger, Corbett and Ballenger's Third Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City of Leadville for 1882 (Leadville, CO: Corbett and Ballenger Publishers, 1882), P191.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Echoes, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) September 26, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Leadville Laconics, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 19, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Read It, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) April 1, 1882, P1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> A Private Party, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 16, 1882, P6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> A Private Party, February 16, 1882, P6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>Beautiful Rooms, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) May 24, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "United States Census, 1870," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<a href="https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M87H-NXP">https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M87H-NXP</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Rachel Jonas in household of Archibald Triplar, New Orleans, Orleans, Louisiana, United States; citing NARA microfilm publication M593 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n. d.), FHL microfilm 552,581.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> "Mississippi, Compiled Marriage Index, 1776-1935," database with images, *Ancestry* (<a href="https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7842&h=264963&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=-1094671152&usePUB=true">https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7842&h=264963&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=-1094671152&usePUB=true</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Frank Heiderhoff, Hancock County, Mississippi; citing *Hunting for Bears, Mississippi Marriages, 1776-1935* (Mississippi: Hancock County Courthouse, n. d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The B'nai Brith, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) November 14, 1880, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The B'nai Brith, November 14, 1880, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The Purim Ball, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) March 7, 1882, P1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Personal Points, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) July 23, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Personal Points, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) October 8, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Lewis Lvon's Reception, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) October 31, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Personal Points, October 8, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> The Campbell Escort, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) September 23, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The Welcome, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) September 19, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> The Usual, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) December 14, 1882, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Personal Paragraphs, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 4, 1883, P4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Chips, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 6, 1883, P4.



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- <sup>32</sup> A Card, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 13, 1883, P1.
- <sup>33</sup> "It's Nice to be a Father," (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald) February 28, 1884, P4.
- <sup>34</sup> Social and Personal, (Leadville, CO: Leadville Evening Chronicle) July 25, 1887, P2.
- <sup>35</sup> Personal Points, (Leadville, CO: Herald Democrat) July 31, 1887, P2.
- <sup>36</sup> "United States Census, 1900," Lewis Lyon.
- <sup>37</sup> "United States Census, 1910," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<a href="https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVL1-NYZ">https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVL1-NYZ</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Milton W Lyons, San Francisco Assembly District 30, San Francisco, California, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 13, sheet 15A, family 309, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 95; FHL microfilm 1,374,108.
- <sup>38</sup> "United States Census, 1920," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<a href="https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MH4W-Z4T">https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MH4W-Z4T</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Samuel Ware in household of Milton W Lyons, San Francisco Assembly District 24, San Francisco, California, United States; citing ED 313, sheet 3A, line 50, family 62, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 141; FHL microfilm 1,820,141.
- <sup>39</sup> "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, *Ancestry* (<a href="https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=6482&h=28748322&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675549975&usePUB=true">https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=6482&h=28748322&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=24675549975&usePUB=true</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Milton William Lyon, San Francisco, San Francisco, California, United States; citing *World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards*, 1917-1918, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n. d.).
- <sup>40</sup> "California, San Francisco Area Funeral Home Records, 1895-1985," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-

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<sup>41</sup> "California, Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," database with images, *Ancestry* (<a href="https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=61066&h=8157882&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=1172577566&usePUB=true">https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=61066&h=8157882&ssrc=pt&tid=5806626&pid=1172577566&usePUB=true</a>: accessed October 20, 2020), Rachel Lyon, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California, United States; citing *Great Register of Voters* (Sacramento, California: California State Library, n. d.).



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