



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Heller

David Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: circa 1838 (Bavaria, Germany)
Died: June 14, 1928
Married to: Fanny (New York 1860)

Fanny Wiel (Heller) (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: 1843 (Prussia)
Died: July 5, 1889 (Denver)
Married to: David Heller (New York 1860)

¹Ascher (Asher) Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: July 21, 1863 (Pennsylvania)
Died: August 10, 1927 (Kansas)²
Married to: Clara Elizabeth Arnold (1892)³

Isadore Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: May 18, 1862 (Ohio)
Died: October 5, 1934 (New York)
Married to: Rachael Fox (1893)

Eva Heller (Mayer) (In Leadville 1885)
Born: August 1865 (New York)
Died: Unknown (Living in 1930)
Married to: Michael Mayer (1883)

Sarah (Sally) Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: May 1867 (New York)
Died: October 19, 1938
Married to: Married: Jacob L. Stern,
January 16, 1887

Charles Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: 1869 (New York)
Died: January 12, 1955
Married to: Carrie Levy (1897 New York)

Mathew Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: September 27, 1871 (New York)
Died: November 21, 1962
Married to: Sadie Kaufman (March 28, 1897
Manhattan)

Samuel Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: 1876 (New York)
Died: Unknown (Living in 1940)
Married to: Florine Block

Abraham Heller (In Leadville 1885-1888)
Born: 1875 (New York)
Died: Unknown (Living in 1940)
Married to: Regina Weber

Henry Heller (In Leadville 1885)
Born: 1877 (Denver)
Died: Unknown
Married to: Unknown

Between 1879 and 1885 a number of individuals with the family name Heller were listed in directories and newspapers in Leadville. None of these can be verified as Jewish. Due to the dynamic nature of the population in the early days of Leadville, most cannot be consistently identified by first name or origin. The primary individual with the name Heller who can be positively identified as Jewish is David Heller, a trustee of Temple Israel in 1885, and his large family.

David Heller and his wife Fanny Wiel were born in Germany in 1838 and 1843 respectively. David was probably born in Bavaria and came to the United States at a young age. He arrived early in comparison to other 19th century Jewish-Germans who did business in Leadville, such as David May (1865) and Leopold Guldman (1870). David Heller arrived in the United States in 1852⁴ and was naturalized in 1859.⁵ The origin and immigration details of Fanny are unknown. David and Fanny were married in Ohio on August 6, 1861⁶, and would go on to have nine children. They lived in Ohio during the Civil War and subsequently moved to New York. The census of 1870 listed 5 children in the Heller household in New York City.⁷ Late in the 1870s the family settled in Colorado. David first appeared in the Denver city directory of 1877 as a clerk for the Weil Brothers (likely brothers-in-law)



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with a residence at 565 Champa Street.⁸ According to the 1880 census, the Hellers lived at 534 Champa Street and seven of their nine children attended school.⁹

While the family was in Denver, the oldest son, Isadore, was a dry goods clerk, Arthur (Ascher) was a teamster, while their father David was listed with “no occupation.” In addition to their mother Fanny, there were seven other children listed in the household. Abraham and Henry were noted as the youngest. The birthdates of the two youngest children also lend evidence to the 1877 arrival date in Denver since Abraham was born in 1875 in New York, and Henry born in 1877 in Colorado.

The Heller’s move to Colorado predated the large scale development of Leadville by only a few years. In the early 1880s, word likely reached the Heller family of the booming silver camp in the mountains and the economic opportunity to be found there. Multiple individuals with the name David Heller appear in hotel and court records in Leadville between 1879 and 1885. Whether these are the same David Heller as the subject of this study cannot be precisely determined. Given Leadville’s importance at the time, David likely made trips to Leadville during the early 1880s to conduct business. Unfortunately, precise evidence of this is lacking. The focus here will begin with the relocation of the family in 1885 and the evidence of activity at Temple Israel.

Along with M.H. Monhiemer and M. Leppel, David Heller was listed a trustee of Temple Israel congregation in 1885.¹⁰ When the family moved to Leadville in 1885, Arthur was recorded as Ascher (sometimes Asher). Ascher and Isadore were born in Ohio and Pennsylvania, while Eva, Sarah (recorded as Sally in Leadville), Charles, Mathew (sometimes recorded as Nathan), Samuel, and Abraham were born in New York. The youngest, Henry (sometimes recorded as Harry) was born in Colorado.¹¹ David and the eldest children in the family operated a clothing store called “Heller &

Mayer & Co.”, also known as “The Fair”.

According to the 1885 Colorado State Census and directory records the Heller family lived at 130 East 7th Street.¹² “The Fair” was managed by Ascher, David was the bookkeeper, Isadore was a cashier, and Sally oversaw the millinery department. The store was located at 420 Harrison Avenue. Fortunately, this building was never demolished and is still in use. The store was located in the northernmost street level commercial unit in the Quincy Block which today (2018) is the location of Casa Sanchez.¹³

The 1885 Colorado state census listed family members by first initial only, but comparison to other sources can determine: D (David), F (Fanny), Sam, A (Ascher), E (Eva) S (Sally or Sarah), C (Charles), M (Mathew), Dan (unknown), Avery (Abraham), and Isadore. Curiously, another Heller family, with identical places or origin, ages, occupation and first initials, is also listed at an unidentifiable address on Poplar street.¹⁴ This was likely an erroneous duplicate entry and is attributable to an error on the part of the census taker.

The Hellers were active in Jewish life during their time in Leadville. Throughout 1885, they appeared at events and parties with other prominent Jewish families such as the Mays, Shoenbergs, Sonnenbergs, Monheimers, and Mayers. Four Heller children are listed as attendees of a “Cloud City Social Club” party in January as well as another party by the same group in February.¹⁵ The club was noted by the newspaper as primarily organized as a Jewish social group with participation from the entire city.¹⁶ Henry was listed as a pupil of Miss Loretta White’s second grade class at the Ninth Street school during the school year of 1885-1886.¹⁷ Heller children are also listed as attendees of a “Hebrew Children’s mask Ball at Armory Hall” in May of 1885.¹⁸ In June, Asher and Mathew attended a vast and elaborate fair organized by the Knights of Robert Emmet. These two older Heller brothers were listed among the hundreds who



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boarded trains to the fairgrounds located west of the city. The grounds were located between the tracks of the Colorado Southern High Line and the Rio Grande (likely near Leadville Junction). Six trains departed Leadville with revelers, and an additional train from the Summit County towns of Robinson, Kokomo, and Breckenridge arrived later. There were shooting galleries, swings attached to trees, and general carnival activities.¹⁹ Later that summer, female members of the family attended the opening party of the Tabor Grand Hotel on July 18, 1885; specifically Sally and Fanny are listed as attendees.²⁰ A Jewish dance at City Hall in September of 1885 listed the attendance of Isadore, Sally, David and Fanny to complete an active year for both the Hellers and the Jewish community.²¹

Leadville's annual Purim Ball in March of 1886 was attended by several Heller brothers. Ascher and Charles' costumes were listed as "clown" and "negro dude" while Isadore was listed as a receptionist. Several other Hellers with varied first initials are listed at the Purim ball that year.²² David and Fanny celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at the family house at 130 East 7th street on August 10, 1886. The newspaper article advertising the event furnished a precise list of names of the Heller's nine children who were present: Eva, Sallie, Isadore, Ascher, Charlie, Nathan, Samuel, Abraham, and Harry.²³ While some inconsistencies exist between this list of children and census records, the newspaper reporter probably took their names accurately. The year 1886 also saw an increase in frequency of advertisements for "The Fair"; ads appear weekly for the entire year. By November of 1886 the store expanded into the unit next door at 418 Harrison Avenue. Sallie participated in a "Moonlit Party" in August at Evergreen with other prominent Jewish attendees such as Fred Butler, Jacob Sands, several Schloss sisters, and two Meyer brothers.²⁴

Sally Heller did not need to venture further than the family business to find herself a husband: Jacob L. Stern²⁵ who had moved to Leadville and took a bookkeeping position with The Fair in the summer of 1886.²⁶ The couple married on January 16, 1887, and shortly afterward removed to a new home in Denver where Jacob found a new position²⁷ with former Leadville businessman Mannie Hyman.²⁸

On January 24, 1887, Charlie left Leadville to seek the care of an ear doctor in New York after sustaining a short term bout of deafness.²⁹ By the fall of 1887, their house at 130 East 7th Street was advertised as a newly opened "first class boarding house" and it was unlikely the family occupied the house after this time.³⁰ By 1908, another famous Jewish Leadville family would move into this same house: the Millers.

In April of 1887, "The Fair" was "disposed of" and the stock was sold off under the supervision of Sam Mayer with an address adjustment to occupy 418 Harrison Avenue.³¹ This precipitated a confusion in monetary exchanges and led to a short series of court proceedings in June that year. According to an explanation in the Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle:

"Asher Heller et al. vs. Sam Mayer et al.: this case was called for trial today and a jury waived by the parties and a trial is being had by the court.

The issue joined in this case are briefly these: About March 20, Trimble & Hunter demanded the payment of about \$7000 from Heller, Mayer & Co. and at the same time Sam Mayer demanded the payment of about \$3000 from the same firm. The plaintiffs claim in this suit that they agreed to assign over to Sam Mayer one the defendants, their stock of goods for the benefit of himself and other creditors of said firm. The written assignment made on that date simply transfers everything in stock of said firm to said Mayer, the consideration being some \$10,000, the amount of Trimble & Hunter's indebtedness together with Mayer's from said firm.



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The Hellers now come in and say they did not understand the assignment to read as it does, and signed it without having it read. There are some queer facts being developed that make the case extremely interesting, and the trial will occupy two days at least".³²

The ultimate decision of the court is unknown, but later newspaper issues include a lengthy statement by Sam Mayer for Trimble & Hunter bill to be paid or "...I shall hand the accounts for collection." Below this statement are large print letters, "SAM MAYER" and "THE FAIR!". It would appear from these notices that the proceedings of this financial issue may have alternatively developed into an advertising strategy.

In December "Isa" (Isadore) and "Asa" (Asher) Heller were listed as attendants of the Frankle-Schoenberg wedding at Temple Israel.³³

None of the members of the David and Fanny Heller family were listed in the Leadville city directory of 1888. This is consistent with a lack of mention of the Heller family in newspapers during this year, aside from a brief legal note of another Mayer-Heller court case. According to the Leadville Daily/ Evening Chronicle, "M. Mayer" and the court again demanded payment of \$7000 from "Ash Heller".³⁴ The result of this case has not been found. Asher was listed as an attendee of a banquet put on by Mrs. Adolph Baer and Mrs. L. D. Shoenberg in February 1888.³⁵ None of the other Hellers are listed in this notice.

By 1889, only first names inconsistent with the David and Fannie Heller family can be found in newspaper mentions. In the mid-summer of 1889, Fannie passed away in Denver.³⁶

The Heller family passes from documentation and appears to be distributed between Denver and New York city over the intervening years.

The Hellers were active in Leadville during the height of Jewish life in the city. The Hellers were also present during Leadville's peak of economic vitality in the middle 1880s. Their departure in late 1888 typified the greater movement of Jews and others from declining prospects in the Carbonate camp.



¹ Due to the number of children and issues associated with historic record keeping, the names of the children are inconsistent between documented evidence. This researcher has made an effort to deduce the identities and life facts of these children using ancestry.com, familysearch.com and findagrave.com. The family tree of Heller as assembled on ancestry.com can be found here: <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/55952037/person/44054682180/facts>. This research used that tree to assemble the above list of Heller family members.

² Ancestry.com. Web: Kansas, Find A Grave Index, 1854-2012 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

Original data: Find A Grave. Find A Grave. <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi>: accessed 18 January 2013.

³ Year: 1900; Census Place: Pleasant, Lincoln, Kansas; Page: 11; Enumeration District: 0066; FHL microfilm: 1240486

Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls.

⁴ Year: 1910; Census Place: Brooklyn Ward 29, Kings, New York; Roll: T624_983; Page: 15A; Enumeration District: 1027; FHL microfilm: 1374996

Ancestry.com. 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006.

⁵ Year: 1920; Census Place: Manhattan Assembly District 23, New York, New York; Roll: T625_1227; Page: 16B; Enumeration District: 1504

Ancestry.com. 1920 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

⁶ Ancestry.com. Ohio, County Marriage Records, 1774-1993 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

Original data: Marriage Records. Ohio Marriages. Various Ohio County Courthouses.

⁷ Year: 1870; Census Place: New York Ward 19 District 19 (2nd Enum), New York, New York; Roll: M593_1044; Page: 178B; Family History Library Film: 552543

Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

⁸ 1877 Denver City Directory p. 137

⁹ Year: 1880; Census Place: Denver, Arapahoe, Colorado; Roll: 88; Page: 252D; Enumeration District: 012

Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010.

¹⁰ "Yisrael's Yeomanry" *Carbonate Chronicle*, September 19, 1885 p 7

¹¹ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MFD6-9DP> : 29 July 2017), Isadore Heller in household of David Heller, Denver, Arapahoe, Colorado, United States; citing enumeration district ED 12, sheet 252D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0088; FHL microfilm 1,254,088.

¹² "Colorado State Census, 1885," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K8WN-WP3> : 1 April 2016), D Heller, 1885; citing NARA microfilm publication M158 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 498,507.

¹³ 1885 Leadville City Directory p. 135

¹⁴ "Colorado State Census, 1885," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K8WN-89P> : 1 April 2016), D Heller, 1885; citing NARA microfilm publication M158 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 498,507.

¹⁵ "Cloud City Social" *Carbonate Chronicle*, February 7, 1885 p 1

¹⁶ "Cloud City Social Club" *Carbonate Chronicle*, January 24, 1885 p 8

¹⁷ "The Roll of Honor" *Herald Democrat*, April 16, 1886 p 2

¹⁸ "Children's Ball" *Carbonate Chronicle*, May 9, 1885 p 3

¹⁹ "Knights of Robert Emmet Jaunt" *Carbonate Chronicle*, June 20, 1885 p 4

²⁰ "The Tabor Grand" *Carbonate Chronicle*, July 18, 1885 p 2

²¹ "Hebrew Hop" *Carbonate Chronicle*, September 26, 1885 p 4

²² "Purim Bal Masque" *Herald Democrat*, March 25, 1886 p 4

²³ "A Pleasant Occasion" *Herald Democrat*, August 10, 1886 p 4



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²⁴ "A Moonlist Party" *Herald Democrat*, August 12, 1886 p 3

²⁵ For more information on Jacob, Sally, and Bulah Stern, please visit: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/stern.html>

²⁶ TB Corbett and JH Ballenger. *Corbet, and Ballenger's Seventh 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 1886.* (Leadville, CO: Corbet and Ballenger Publishers). 1886. P237.

²⁷ JH Ballenger and Richards. *Ballenger & Richard's Sixteenth Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City of Denver for 1888.* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Internet Archive. 2011). P845.

²⁸ For more information on Mannie Hyman, and the rest of his family, please visit: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/hyman.html>

²⁹ "Personal" *Carbonate Chronicle*, January 24, 1887 p 6

³⁰ "Advertisements" *Herald Democrat*, October 8, 1887 p 4

³¹ "No More!" *Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle*, April 7, 1887 p 4

³² "The Legal Log" *Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle*, June 1, 1887 p 3

³³ "Frankle-Schoenberg" *Herald Democrat*, December 6, 1887 p 3

³⁴ "District Court" *Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle*, August 27, 1888 p 3

³⁵ "Complementary Banquet" *Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle*, February 4, 1888 p 3

³⁶ "Find A Grave Index," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2DV-ZCGV> : 6 December 2016), Fanny D. Heller, 1889; Burial, Denver, Denver, Colorado, United States of America, Congregation Emanuel Cemetery; citing record ID 170266932, Find a Grave, <http://www.findagrave.com>.



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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Leadville, Lake County, Colorado. Sanborn Map Company, Oct, 1889. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn01031_001/.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Leadville, Lake County, Colorado. Sanborn Map Company, 1895. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn01031_001/.

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1880 United States Federal Census
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1920 United States Federal Census
1930 United States Federal Census
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Newspapers:

Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado)

Carbonate Chronicle (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado)

Herald Democrat (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado)

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