

# Crossing Lines



A record of the 1992–93 exhibit  
conceived by Judith S. Goldstein and  
organized by the University of Maine Museum of Art

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## FOREWORD

Several years ago I was an official guest of the government of the Soviet Union at the Kirov Ballet in the beautiful city then known as Leningrad. Chauffeured in a Volga limousine to the Opera House, I was honored with a front row seat in the Czar's box. As I sat in that magnificent theater watching a performance of "Giselle," I wished that my mother's father – who had been sent alone to America at the age of twelve to escape conscripted service in the Czar's army – could have tasted the delicious irony of his grandson's experience.

Harry Epstein's life was remarkable: he arrived in America with nothing, spoke

no English, and spent what remained of his boyhood as a peddler on the roads of eastern Maine; yet he became a successful and respected merchant in Bangor. How the fabric of our society ultimately stretched to accommodate him and his children, their children and now mine, is a story repeated with different names in different places for Jews all over America. In that respect, what is most remarkable about the story of Harry Epstein and his family is now unremarkable a story it was.

The 1992–93 *Crossing Lines* exhibit, based upon Judith Goldstein's fine and perceptive book of the same title and assembled by the

University of Maine Museum of Art, captured in text and images the enduring faith and extraordinary strength of my generation's parents and grandparents.

The exhibit also told the story of a time and place – America in the earlier twentieth century – where upward mobility perhaps was easier to accomplish than it is today. My grandfather lived to see his children and grandchildren thriving in a society which had made room for them.

I want my children to understand what my parents taught me: that there is no important difference between their refugee great-grandfather and today's immigrants to America

from Cambodia, Salvador, Ethiopia, or Haiti, and that we are *obligated* to help provide the kinds of opportunities which Harry Epstein found in America to those who now follow his path, a century later.

This record of the *Crossing Lines* exhibit should remind Jews not only of the pride they should take in what their forebears accomplished, but also of the special responsibility we have to keep America's ladders in place and doorways open for others.

**Eliot R. Cutler**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**July 7, 1994**

**THE EXHIBIT** was based on Judith S. Goldstein's book *Crossing Lines, Histories of Jews and Gentiles in Three Maine Communities*, (William Morrow and Company, Inc. 1992). It was organized by the University of Maine Museum of Art; curated by Jordan S. Alpert, Judith S. Goldstein, and Vincent A. Hartgen; and funded in part by the Jewish Community Endowment Associates and the Maine Humanities Council.

**CROSSING LINES**, Histories of Jews and Gentiles in Bangor, Mount Desert Island, and Calais, Maine, was presented at the Bangor Historical Society, College of the Atlantic, Calais Free Library, Portland Public Library, and the University of Maine Museum of Art between May, 1992 and September, 1993.

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**TEXT COPYRIGHT** 1994 by Judith S. Goldstein.

**COVER:** Israel Cutler, age 6, in Russia.

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When they arrived in Bangor, Mount Desert Island, and Calais, Maine, immigrant Jews confronted native born Protestants with an alien religion and culture. The *Crossing Lines* exhibit pictured the richly diverse local histories of a complex process of adjustment, which began in the late nineteenth century and continued through the 1960s and 1970s.

Away from the vibrant but chaotic centers of immigrant life in large Eastern cities, Maine's Jewish immigrants faced distinctive challenges in their adopted Yankee world. Although isolated from other immigrant Jews throughout the state and on the East Coast, Jews in Bangor, Mt. Desert Island and Calais were never cut off from Gentile customers and neighbors. The relationships between the two groups are essential for understanding the social and economic histories of each place.

"Crossing Lines" is the history of accommodation among Protestant lumber barons, Jewish peddlers, Wall Street financiers, Main Street clothing merchants, local and national elites and immigrants from Germany and Russia. Some of the subjects, such as John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Jacob H. Schiff, Charles W. Eliot and Henry Morgenthau, Sr., maintain strong national reputations many years after their deaths. Others—Dr. Lawrence Cutler, his wife Catherine, Judge Abraham Rudman, Sarah and Arthur Unobskey, Judge Harold Murchie and Francis Brown—achieved distinction on a local and state scale.

Patterns of acceptance varied from place to place. Calais was the most tolerant towards the Jews, Mt. Desert Island, the least. In Bangor and Mt. Desert Island, Protestants and Jews made contacts in some areas, but rigorously avoided others. Rejection, which had been fueled by anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic attitudes, eventually gave way to economic mobility and acceptance. In two respects, however, Bangor, Mt. Desert and Calais shared a legacy which affected both Jews and Gentiles. At one time or another the three places boomed with American-style success: wealth, rapid civic, residential and commercial development, proud reputations and confidence

about the future. At other times, all three experienced plummeting fortunes.

Bangor, the largest of the three communities, attracted the most Jews—nearly 1,200 after the turn of the century. Jewish immigrants thought they could do well in the city that had grown rich in the mid-nineteenth century from lumber and shipping. By the 1890s, with a population that hovered around 20,000, the city had grown into a vigorous trading center with fine homes and beautiful tree-lined streets. Its leading citizens, mostly businessmen and professionals, constituted a powerful economic and political force in the state.

In the twentieth century, as the lumber trade moved away, Bangor sought to sustain its status, wealth, population and social structure by becoming a transportation center. At the

same time, in response to the influx of immigrants, the city maintained a firm system of ethnic segregation which kept the Russian Jewish immigrants and their children from entering positions of civic leadership. While Protestant control held firm, Bangor lost its battle for renewed economic success. The city slipped slowly into resignation and rested on its legendary past.

Mt. Desert Island, a gilded world unto itself, became the fanciest

summer resort in Maine. For many years, Bar Harbor, the most famous of the several colonies on Mt. Desert, was second only to Newport in social cachet and summer display. From the 1880s on, Mt. Desert's success was carefully contrived. The glittering gathering of new and old money—"squillionaires" and Boston Brahmins—attracted the best of the "intercity" aristocracy and excluded immigrants, who were considered to be the most undesirable. In Maine's finest social frontier, Protestant leaders from America's major cities were confident that they would not find more than a handful of Jewish immigrants from Germany and Eastern Europe. They were right. There were a few Jewish merchants—such as the Poviches, Hilsons, Schiros and Kursons—who owned stores in Bar Harbor. But Joseph Pulitzer, Jacob H. Schiff and Henry Morgenthau, Sr. were among the very few Jews who broke





Plate #1. List of captions on page 55

through the restrictive social barriers.

Calais, a small self-contained city of 5,000 also had a vigorous economy built around lumber and shipbuilding. Like Bangor, Calais needed to develop substantial new areas of trade and wealth by the turn of the twentieth century. The resources in Calais were much more limited than Bangor's and the decline took a more precipitous turn. Yet, in one respect, the small city thrived: its own remarkable brand of ethnic tolerance allowed a tiny Jewish population to gain acceptance far ahead of other Jews in Maine. Unfortunately, the city could not convert its liberalism and mixed ethnic leadership into economic success.

**T**he Jewish immigrants in Bangor, Mt. Desert Island and Calais differed in their numbers, cohesiveness and inclination to build Jewish institutions. They were similar, however, in some patterns of development. First, the immigrants were peddlers. Then the more successful immigrants established clothing and dry goods stores on Main Street in Bar Harbor, Bangor and Calais. They scrimped and saved to pull their families away from Russia to create new lives in

Maine. They poured their hopes into their Americanized children who rose through the public educational system into the middle class. As the immigrants and their children reached out to be part of American life, their Eastern European religious and cultural traditions were radically changed. The mix between the old and new lives was frequently awkward and painful.

In this booklet the histories of Bangor, Mt. Desert Island and Calais are treated in three sections but all follow a chronological form. In the context of the Jewish-Gentile experience, they extend from the Gilded Age through the First World War, the Twenties and Thirties, the Second World War, post-war prosperity and the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. The histories begin within a framework of Protestant domination and wealth and immigrant impotence and poverty. They traverse decades of challenge and aspiration, fear and segregation. And they conclude as Protestant exclusivity gave way to equality of opportunity for Jews, in all but a few pockets of Maine's life.



#2, above #3, at right



# Bangor

The first Jewish immigrants from Russia in the 1880's and 1890's were drawn to Bangor, a city rich from its lumber trade on the Penobscot River. It was a typical, pleasing American city with a rich, pioneering, lumbering and land-speculating past. In the Queen City, as it proudly called itself, there was Main Street, State and Center

Streets and Broadway. It boasted many fine homes, beautiful shaded streets, handsome institutions, distinguished leaders and prominent families. The city cultivated a special place — through commerce, society and culture — in the urban landscape in Maine and New England.

Bangor's early expansion was guided, in part, by the proverbial planning grid. Yet the physical layout had an unpredictable configuration. The city, snug and walkable, was pleasingly ensconced in hills, some steep, some gently sloped, along the Penobscot River and Kenduskeag Stream. Churches, irregularly tucked

into hills throughout the city, dominated the horizon in all directions. In its mercantile-civic center, well-designed public and commercial buildings and fine shops alternated with wharves and inexpensive stores.



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#5, left  
#6, above

**B**angor lived at the edge of a vast unknown territory. Much of that land in the 1890s and through the first decades of the twentieth century was traded, owned or controlled in Bangor. The Penobscot River was Bangor's channel of communication and commerce to the timberlands and outside world. For decades, the Penobscot, above and below

Bangor, served as a corridor for log driving, ice harvesting and carrying people and goods, by sailing vessel and steamship, in and out of the city.

Stetson, Strickland, Webber and Hill were some of the names that dominated the lumber trade and Bangor commercial life. Among that group, William Engel was the

only Jewish immigrant—among the immigrants from Germany and Russia—who amassed a fortune in the lumber trade. His success accorded him a term as Bangor's mayor.

**U**pon arriving in America, most Russian Jewish immigrants first entered the turbulent, compressed currents of the

East Coast ghettos in New York and Boston. Some of those immigrants restlessly broke away, blown by the winds of chance, rumor or family ties. A few heard flimsy tales of work in Bangor. Others followed the jagged tracks of family, friends and acquaintances who had already made their way to the Maine city.



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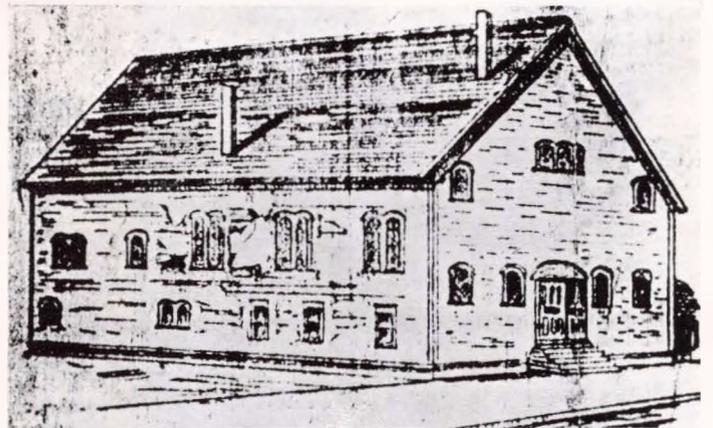


#9

The Russian Jews arrived in Maine as poor and foreign speaking-immigrants. Survival and work were their first tasks. With few skills and no capital, the Russian Jews peddled among Gentiles in the city or at country farms, traveling by foot with packs on their backs. They bought or exchanged whatever small goods they could carry. With piecemeal success they

obtained carts, horses and capital.

The Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe joined others from Ireland, Turkey, Canada, Poland and Greece under the long shadow of the red brick St. John's Catholic Church on York Street. The Russian Jews were determined to establish a community and identity of



#10

their own as Jews in Bangor. Families such as the Goldmans, Cohens, Rudmans and the Epsteins were early members of Beth

Israel, a simple synagogue on Center Street built in 1897, which served their communal and spiritual needs.



#11



#12

Jewish immigrants worked hard to make the transition from itinerant peddlers to merchants with stores “downtown.” They aspired to work on Exchange or Broad Streets, where a vigorous mercantile life was centered around a tight concentration of buildings and businesses. Jewish immigrants—such as Hyman Epstein—established dry goods, clothing and confectionery stores. They

competed fiercely for the business of lumbermen and laboring classes at the low end of the retail market.

By 1910, the area around Hancock Street was Bangor’s own Lower East Side; it had become the home of 70 percent of the city’s Jewish immigrants. Marriages within the small Orthodox community of approximately 840 people



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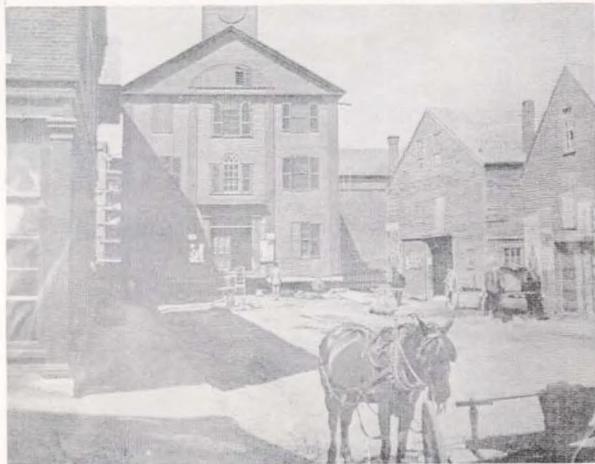
#16

created intricate familial webs. Ida Epstein and her children made up one branch of the large Epstein clan.

These Russian Jewish immigrants were not the first Jewish people to settle in Bangor. Two sets of German Jews preceded the immigrants from Russia. One group came in the 1840s and another in the 1860s and 1870s. By the 1890s, the second group had established a substantial place in Bangor's commercial and social life. They included William Engel, a timberland owner and one-term mayor of

the city, Julius Waterman and Louis Kirstein. Waterman, whose clothing store was well-advertised on trolleys and in the press, was also well known for his generosity. For several years he treated all Bangor high school boys to a day at Riverside Park, one of Bangor's amusement parks. Both the German and Russian-born Jewish immigrants opened their Bangor busi-

nesses side-by-side with long-established firms such as N.H. Bragg, a well-known hardware store.



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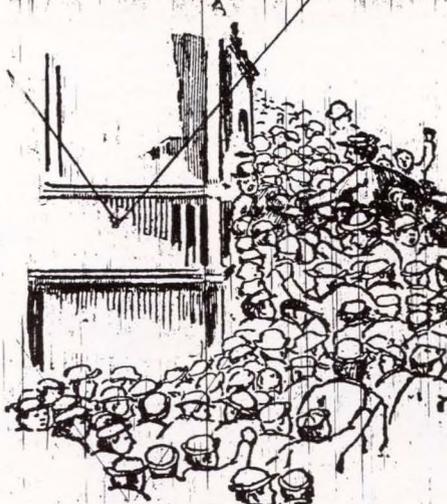
**B**angor wanted a secure place on the competitive edge of Maine's economy and culture. In Bangor's mercantile-civic center, well-designed public and commercial buildings and fine shops alternated with wharves and inexpensive stores. The city

proudly claimed its own opera house, eighteen churches, a city poor farm, the Bangor Theological Seminary, a festival concert auditorium, a large Spanish-Romanesque passenger depot for the Maine Central Railroad, four hotels, a YMCA, a hybrid

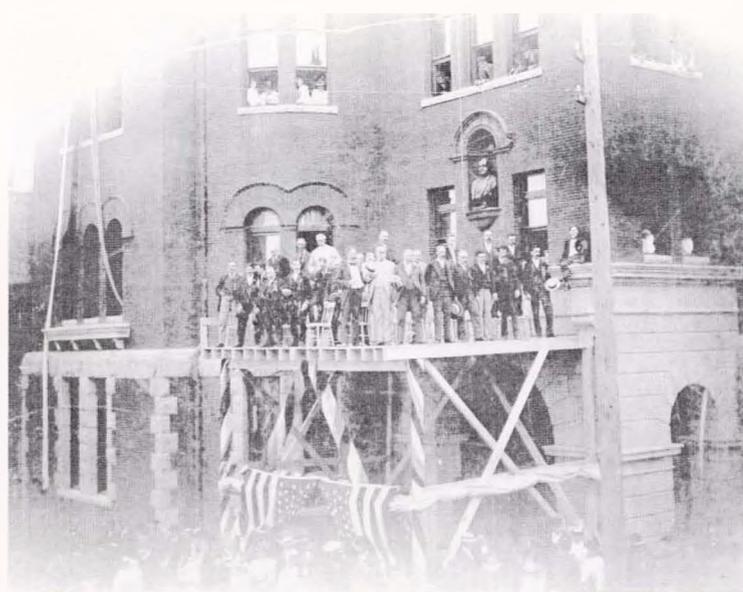
Greek Revival county courthouse, market squares, a posh cycling club, and a garden cemetery at Mt. Hope. By the 1890s, however, the old wooden building which served as City Hall failed to embody Bangor's pride and image as a dynamic urban center.

Bangor residents enjoyed themselves on the outskirts of the city at Maplewood Park. Every August, they also promoted their prospering commercial life when thousands of visitors attended the Bangor Fair at the park.

...for the regular patrons of that etc. In the midst of it a man v  
 tion of the house do not attend, for to buy a ticket. He was told the  
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ON THE GALLERY STAIRS.



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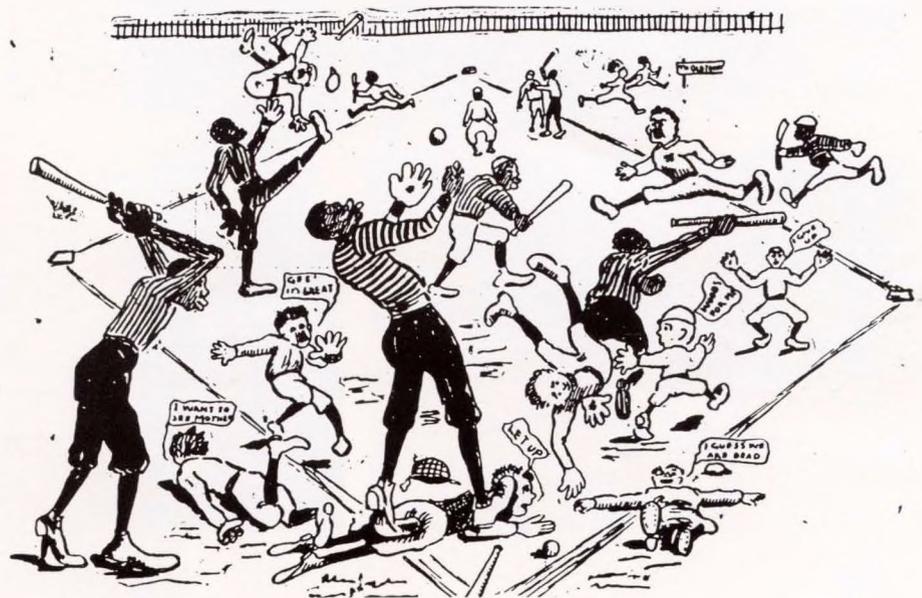
## All Coons Look Alike

Mayor Flavius O. Beal was the main force pushing for a new city hall. By the mid-1890s, he had his way when Bangor built a towering Normanesque structure. Beal and other dignitaries presided at the festive opening.

busy with work and a vigorous social life. The social, economic and cultural life in Bangor, however, was based upon firm racial and religious boundaries that applied to Irish Catholics, blacks and the newly arrived Russian Jewish immigrants.

The sixty-foot tower, crowned by a stretched winged eagle, peered over a city that was

As the group of Russian Jewish immigrants grew, the press took note of them in



ways that were not always flattering. Cartoons and distorted images accompanied stereotyped references. A "Hebrew" lady was the center of bedlam as she pulled her children – "lkeys" – through a crowded theater. Another cartoon showed a "Hebrew" merchant in tough negotiations with a customer. In general, insensitivity towards ethnic groups was

commonplace. An advertisement for safes, showing the face of a black boy, appeared on one of the opening pages of the 1901 Bangor City Directory. A newspaper story described and pictured the humiliating defeat of Bangor's baseball team by the "colored champions," the Philadelphia Giants.



## Has Taught Hundreds of Bangor's Little Foreigners

MISS MARY R. SPRATT HOLDS UNIQUE PLACE AMONG CITY'S TEACHERS. MANY LITTLE ADOPTED BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE LEARNED THEIR FIRST WORDS OF ENGLISH IN HER SCHOOLROOM

After her return to the Bangor school system, Miss Mary R. Spratt, for 12 years, has been a teacher. It has been 20 years since she first came to Bangor, and she has since then taught in a school where she has marked the growth of many of the adopted children in the heart of the city. It is estimated that during the last 15 years perhaps 1000 of these little adopted children have been taught in her schoolroom.

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- #27, bottom left
- #28, bottom right

- On page 13:
- #29, top
  - #30, bottom left
  - #31, bottom right



Improvements in the city's schools, the establishment of a hospital and the expansion of civic and social institutions attested to Bangor's growth.

The school system expanded with a dedicated staff who taught both the native born and "the little foreigners," as the press proudly noted. Immigrant hopes for improving their lives converged with the fervor and efforts of Bangor teachers who

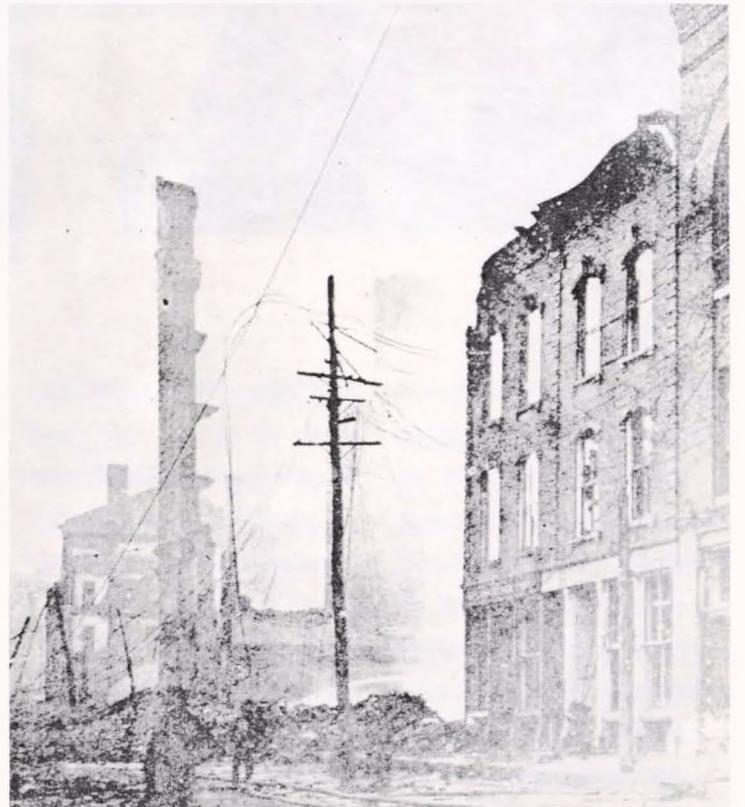
worked during the days and evenings with the foreign populations. Mary Spratt, a teacher at the State Street School that served the Jewish population, was primarily responsible for teaching foreign children—nearly two thousand between 1905 and 1920. "There is no way," Mary Spratt said, "by which we can make anyone feel that it is a blessed and splendid thing to

be an American, unless we...interpret Americanism by our kindness, our courage, our generosity and our fairness."

Bangor could not fail to recognize the impact of immigrants in its schools and commercial life, but some aspects of Jewish existence escaped public notice. Despite a growing Jewish population and two separate

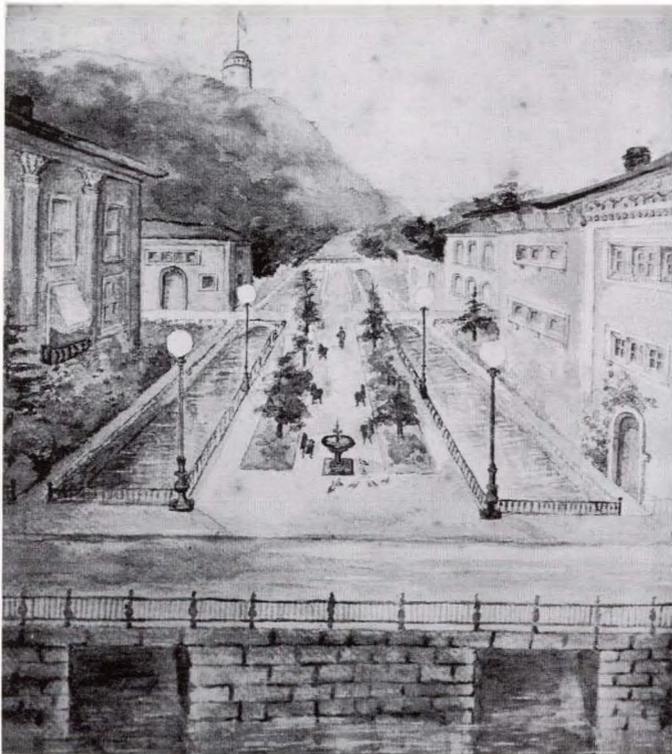
Jewish cemeteries, only Catholic and Protestant deaths were recorded in annual city reports.

The great fire of 1911 ravaged major portions of downtown and areas up the hills. There were two deaths and many injuries. Three hundred and eighty-five buildings were consumed, including 289

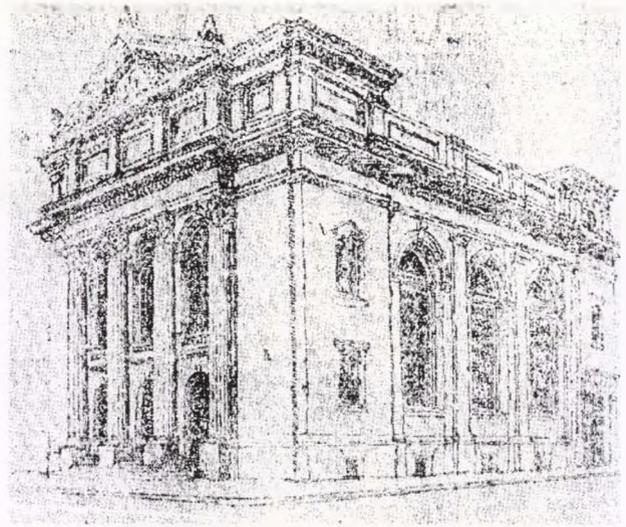


homes—from the shabbiest to the finest in the city—and nearly a hundred businesses. Many of Bangor's most important civic and religious buildings were destroyed: the high school, post office,

customshouse, courthouse, the central fire station, six churches and Beth Israel Synagogue.



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#35

The fire presented new challenges and opportunities as the city set out immediately to rebuild itself. Fifty thousand dollars was quickly raised for the relief of victims. A hastily organized Committee on Civic Improvement sponsored a progressive redevelopment plan designed to make Bangor

look like the "Venice of the North." The first design for Beth Israel closely followed the broad classical theme proposed by the Committee of Civic Improvement.

When the city rejected many of the committee's recommendations, for aesthetic and

financial consideration, Beth Israel suddenly changed its plan as well. The leadership dropped its ambitious plan for a soaring stone structure which would have conformed to Manning's classical model. The synagogue, instead, erected a strictly utilitarian fire proof building. Other institutions recovered quickly. All

Souls Congregational Church, joined from Central Church and the First Congregational Church both of which had been destroyed in the fire, rose in stone and spire on a stately site.



#36

The Directors of Beth Israel bore the responsibility for raising \$38,000, the final cost of the new synagogue. A 1913 photograph of Beth Israel's directors shows a group of seventeen sturdy men of varied ages: some wore suits, others frock coats; some wore hats, some skullcaps; most had beards

or mustaches, while four of the younger men were clean-shaven. All bore serious, even stern, expressions. While they secured a bank loan, they mainly relied upon fellow congregants and on benefactors for donations. Jacob H. Schiff, the most renowned American Jewish leader in the early twentieth

century, gave the largest gift. Every other August he made a visit from Bar Harbor to Beth Israel on the anniversary of his father's death.

The Jewish community upon which Schiff bestowed his gift was making its own economic progress. Their success, in a community of over 300

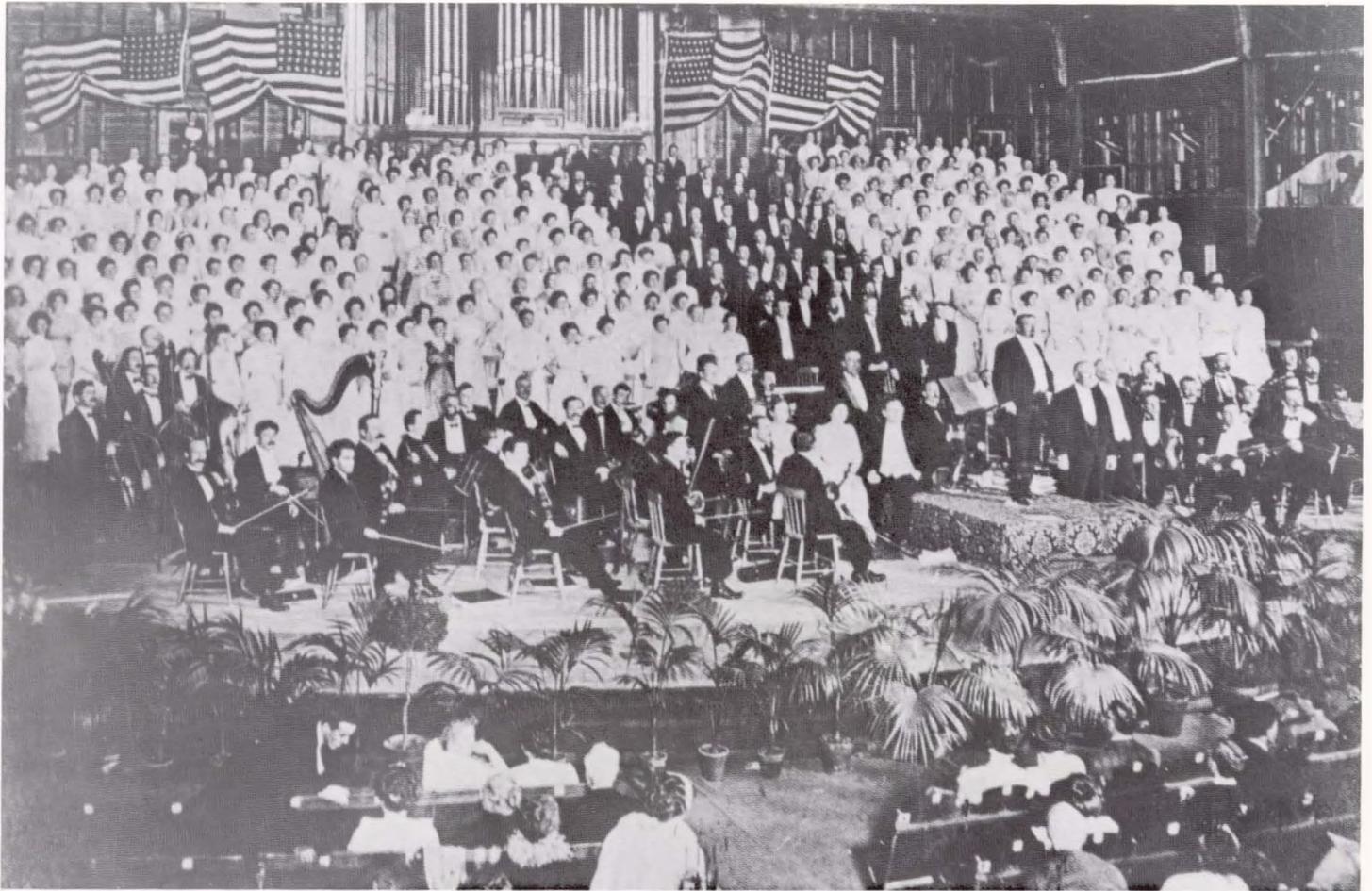
Jewish families, derived from Bangor's strong commercial life. With its handsome railroad and steamship terminals, Bangor remained the transportation center of central and northern Maine, notwithstanding the damage from the fire. Main Street in Bangor was the center of commerce for central Maine.



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Auditorium and Annex  
 (Home of Eastern Maine Festival,)  
 Bangor, Maine.



From 1897 through the mid-1920s, William Chapman, director of the Maine Festival, put Bangor on the State's cultural map. Year after year, he trained the local chorus and orchestra, promoted the festival and lured the world's greatest artists to perform operatic, choral and symphonic works. The festival, held in an auditorium which seated 4,000 people, lasted for three days in Bangor and then moved down to Portland.

Local architect Victor Hodgins, who designed the first Beth Israel synagogue and the aborted plan for the classical post-fire edifice, was responsible for the acoustically superb auditorium.

Over-sized, front-page pictures in the press heralded the arrival of the festival. Stories about the artists' careers, performances, marriages and divorces were avidly followed. Personal

appearances, contacts on and off the stage and any recognition of Bangor's special qualities were treasured and reported at length.



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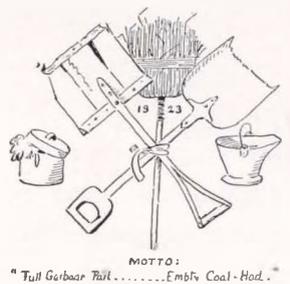
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The Penobscot River, Bangor's connection to the outside world, was also an awesome physical threat that menaced Bangor with spring floods. The heavy

snows and occasional flooding did not daunt the city or most of its citizens. The cold, however, did irk the writer George Savery Wasson who lived in Bangor for many

years. He railed against the harsh winters and created his own city seal. A full frozen garbage pail and empty coal hod featured the ignominies of the Bangor winter.



MOTTO:  
"Tull Garbaar Full.....Embf Coal-Hod.."



Patriotism, preparedness and the romance of war infused Bangor from 1916 through 1918. Bangor prided itself on being as patriotic as any other flag-waving American city. During World War I, 800 Bangor men served in the armed forces. Citizens followed the war. Campaign by campaign, battle by battle, with fervor and then with sadness Bangor residents took count of the local injuries and deaths. The city's support for the war included massive patriotic parades and Liberty Loan rallies. The Jewish community was lauded for its donations on behalf of the war effort, as were all other immigrant groups, except the Germans.

One night, the Sons and Daughters of Zion greeted the Jewish Legion as it passed on a train through Bangor to join the British army. One soldier long remembered that evening in Bangor. "...There was the wishing of all good things, again there was the exchange of kisses. But somehow, the girls of Bangor and their kisses were different from those of other places....unless you were with us that night you cannot know what a real kiss is."



#47, top

#48, middle left

#49, middle right

#50, bottom

Page 21:  
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#52, below



# SIMON COHEN BUYS MID-TOWN PROPERTY

**Famous Merchant Acquires Building at 40-44 Main Street, Occupied by Two Stores and Chamber of Commerce—A Remarkable Career of Success in Trade and Real Estate Investment.**

The contributions of Bangor's Jewish community in men and money for the war effort created a new status and connection to the city. At the end of the war, Bangor's Jews joined the armistice

parade feeling proud, thankful and equal in sacrifice to their Protestant neighbors.

If the war had been a triumph of sorts for the immigrant Jews and their children in

America, the following twenty years of peace proved to be different. In the 1920s, business prosperity and educational advancement appeared to cushion the impact of growing anti-immigrant sentiments and anti-Semitism in Bangor and across the country. In fact, as Bangor and the Jewish community prospered, State Street featured businesses

such as Goldberg's Clothing Store. The Cohen brothers were also major figures in Bangor: Simon was a retailer, Max, a Republican Party leader and Louis, a member of the Bangor Symphony Orchestra.

Inevitably, many of the Jewish immigrants who arrived after the turn of the century adhered to different rituals from those of the



earlier immigrants. Unwilling to give up familiar and traditional forms of prayers and services, the newcomers formed Beth Abraham synagogue. Eventually, Beth Abraham and Beth Israel faced each other on York Street. At one time, there were four synagogues in Bangor.

The Cohen brothers epitomized the diversity and Americanized success of Bangor's Jewish population. The increasing acculturation and prosperity of the new generation of Jewish men was graphically shown in a group gathered for a pre-wedding celebration.

Large numbers of Bangor's immigrants and succeeding



generations tried to maintain their religious traditions. This was not easy. Parents and children struggled to adjust their religious practices to

America's Protestant culture. Inevitably, students resisted the traditional way of learning by rote and the restrictive aura of Old World piety

brought over by the immigrants and the non-English speaking teachers and rabbis.

#53, top

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Religious affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

1. Remember to give your first feeling reactions in every case.
2. Give your reactions to each race as a group. Do not give your reactions to the best or to the worst members that you have known, but think of the picture that you have of the whole.
3. Put a cross after each race in as many of the seven columns as your feeling reactions dictate.

#54, middle left

	Pole	Swede	Jew	Greek	Chinese	Negro	Italian	French Canadian	English
I would be willing to marry	4	20	1	2	1	1	2	6	23
I would be willing to have as a regular friend	16	20	12	9	7	8	13	17	23
I would be willing to work beside in an office	19	22	18	15	12	9	19	20	23
I would be willing to live in the same neighborhood	16	21	15	10	10	7	15	17	23
I would have merely as a speaking acquaintance	4	0	4	8	11	13	6	0	0
I would <del>debar</del> from my neighborhood	3	0	4	6	7	12	8	0	0
I would <del>debar</del> from my country	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0

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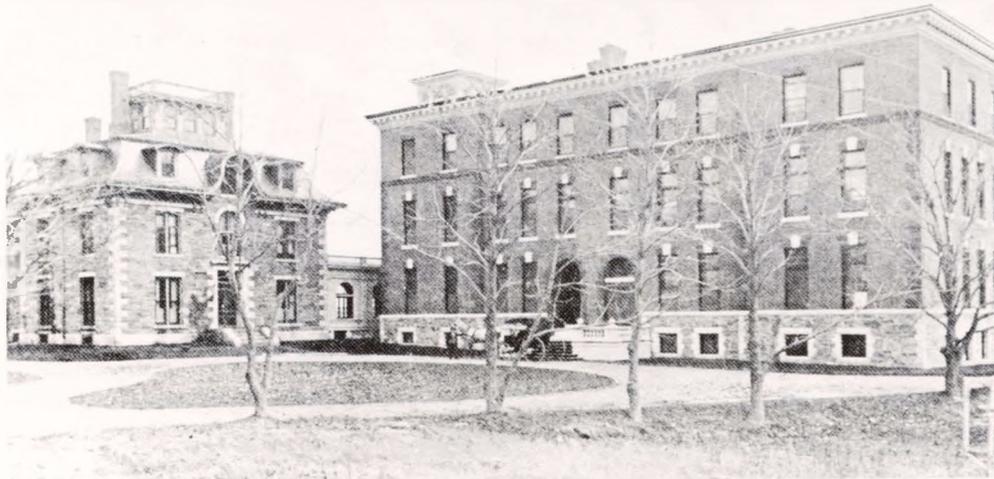
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As the Jewish community thrived along with the city, Jews moved away from their original immigrant neighborhoods around Hancock and York Streets. In 1940, Lucille Epstein documented in her fine master's thesis the shifting occupational and residential patterns which gave rise to new attitudes about neighborhoods, families and marriage.

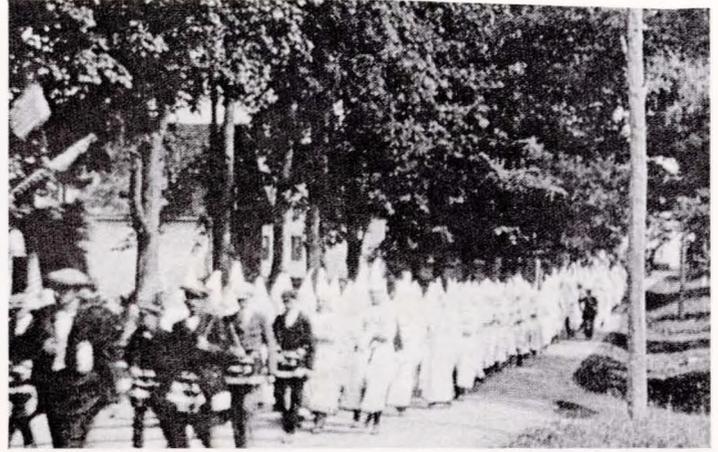


The 1920's brought rising anti-Semitism in colleges, universities, clubs, businesses, resorts and residential areas and the imposition of restrictive immigration laws. Severe quotas were established by Congress against immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

As a result of the new laws, Russian Jewish immigration virtually came to an end in Bangor and all over America.

At the same time, Bangor's Jewish professionals -- especially doctors and lawyers -- confronted a system of economic and social restriction. In the late 1930's, Dr. Cutler was the first Jewish doctor allowed to treat his patients at the Eastern Maine General Hospital. Some years later, after his return from World War II service, Cutler persuaded Henry Wheelwright—the president of the hospital's board of trustees and for many years

Bangor's most powerful citizen—to open the staff to any qualified doctor.



**B**angor's religious and social life revolved around its churches, synagogues and fraternal organizations. The divisions between the native-born Gentiles and the immigrant Jews were imbedded in these institutions. The complexity of attitudes among ethnic groups--traditional suspicions, uncertainties, and uncomfortable feelings--were revealed in Lucille Epstein's master thesis.

The most blatant prejudice surfaced in the 1920s when the Ku Klux Klan gained support through its anti-Catholic, anti-black and anti-Semitic stands. Brewer was the home to many Klansmen who paraded through its streets. There were no recorded anti-Semitic incidents related to the KKK but a threatening aura surrounded Bangor's Jews because of the Klan's public positions. The Klan lost its hold in Maine in only a few years.

Rate in which Jewish householders moved out of designated area of city.

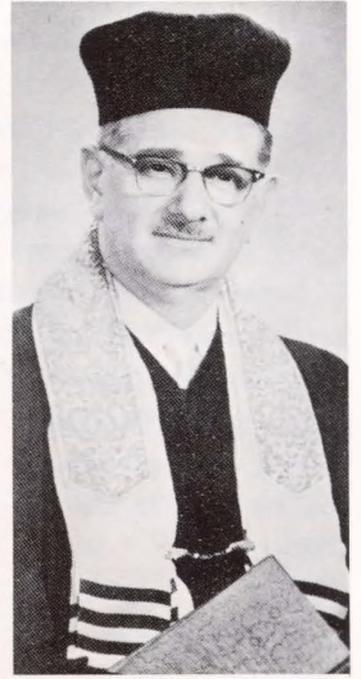
Decade	Rate in which householders moved out of designated area of city
1910-21	27%
1921-30	12.7%
1930-40	12.6%

*Note*  
 In the decade between 1910 and 21, 27% of the Jewish householders residing in Bangor moved into the residential sections of the city, north of State Street and on the West side of the city. No significant spatial pattern is evident over the ~~number of~~ proportion of householders leaves the designated area, presumably because Bangor is a small city allowing only a few definitely determined areas regions.

The prosperity of the group can, of course, be measured by its rate of removal from the ~~same~~ section of original settlement, and this prosperity seemed to come in the second ~~and~~ decade of the century. <sup>during the period of World War prosperity.</sup> An examination of the economic distribution of the group has been ~~tabulated~~ <sup>tabulated</sup> for the year 1921. ~~The~~ The remaining two decades,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 75.

I hope I did the right thing when I omitted this. S.G.M

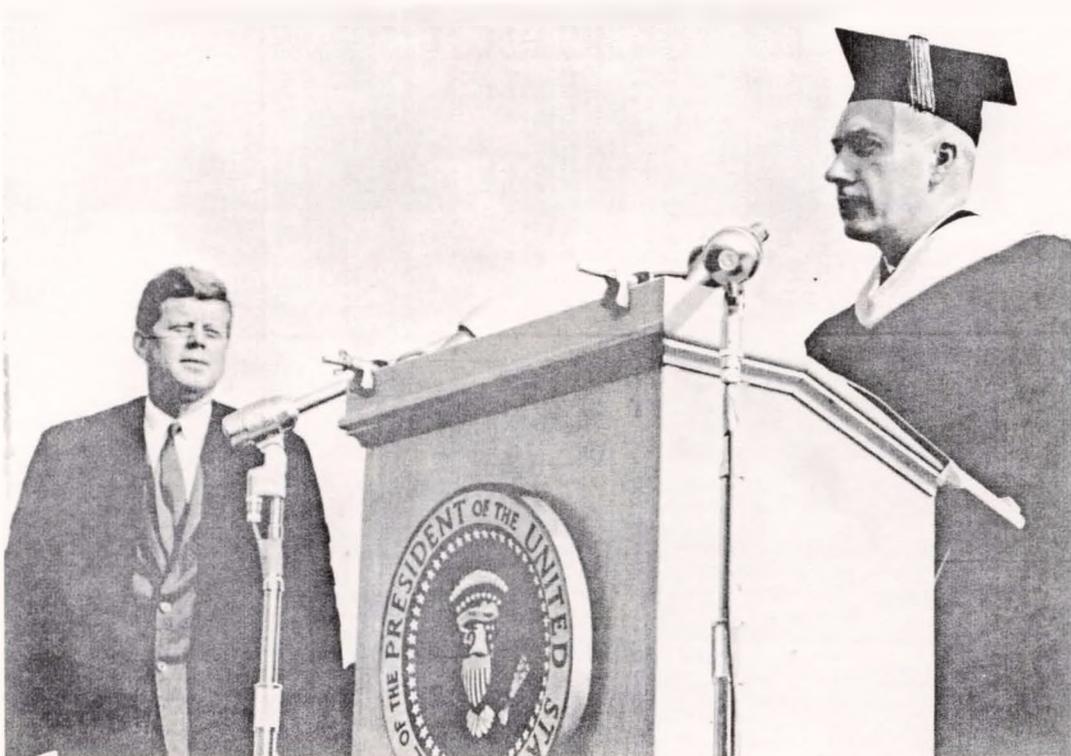


In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, the Jewish community grew from within. At one time, there were four synagogues, a Jewish community center and many Zionist and philanthropic organizations.

Rabbi Henry Isaacs (lower right) became the rabbi of Beth Abraham Synagogue in 1961. He boldly reshaped his congregation's commitment and definition of what it meant to be an Orthodox Jew in Bangor.

Gentiles and Jews learned to trust each other and accommodate their difference. They worked slowly and steadily through the strong leadership of Rabbi Avraham Freedman, Rev. Arlen Baillie, of All Souls Congregational Church, Dr. Cutler, Judge Abraham Rudman (later appointed to Maine's Supreme Court) and Lloyd Elliott, President of the University of Maine.

- #59, top left
- #60, top middle
- #61, top right
- #62, bottom left
- #63, bottom right



#64, above  
#65, middle  
#66, below



The Penobscot Valley Country Club was founded in 1924 with 350 members. It maintained a restrictive social policy until the early 1960s, when President Elliott prohibited University functions at clubs and other facilities that discriminated against various ethnic and racial groups. The Country Club then opened its membership to a full range of the area's residents.

Dr. Lawrence Cutler was an outstanding leader in the development of public education. He served as a member of the Bangor School Board for ten years and then as the first Jewish trustee on the governing board of the University of Maine. He remained on the board for 20 years, including 10 as its chairman.

From the late 1930s through the 1960s, the Jewish Community Center was the energetic focal point for educational, social and philanthropic programs. In fact, both Jews and non-Jews educated and entertained themselves at the center.





#67

From the 1890s through the late 20th century, three generations of Bangor Jews forged a stable community through hard work, the slow, sometimes haphazard addition of family members and friends and belief in the American dream of acceptance and improvement.

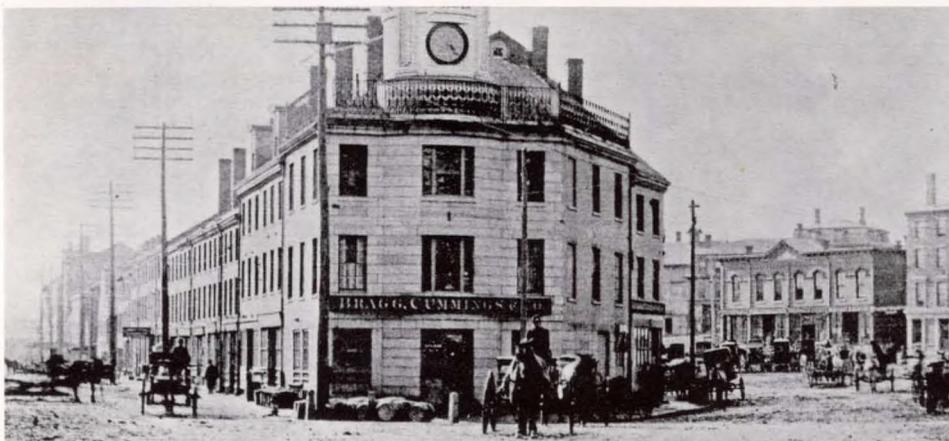


#68

Bangor experienced many profound social, economic, religious and demographic changes during these decades. Its Protestant leadership and Jewish community found common ground. The lumber economy eroded—except for the vast holdings of several old Bangor families. Boats and railroads disappeared. While the city's commercial life remained based on its transportation network and retail stores, the center of commerce moved from the river to the highway. The core of historic downtown was pressed under the weight of decaying residential and commercial structures.



#69



#70

Bangor opted for urban renewal. The Mercantile Building, along with many others, was torn down as part of a sweeping redevelopment program starting in the 1960s. Only a few buildings, such as the State Street School, remain today as relics of Bangor's immigrant and educational past. They are covered by a pastiche of retail stores.



#73



#71



#74

#72



The dirt roads that the immigrant peddler Wolf Lipsky traveled, by foot and on horse, are now threaded with concrete arteries that serve the contemporary city of 30,000--Bangor of the Turnpike.

**B**angor's history derives in part from the accomplishments and leadership of many families. The Webbers and Cutlers are among those

that add distinction to Bangor's past.

John Prescott Webber was one of many ambitious men in the 19th century who founded an outstanding Bangor family. Its success and prominence was built on lumber wealth. This volatile industry dominated Bangor's commercial life and made the city famous and rich.

Webber built his fortune when enormous properties came onto the auction market at low prices during the depression of the late 1870's. The Webbers became land rich, thriving in Bangor society for several generations.

G. Peirce Webber, a great grandson of John Prescott Webber, is today recognized as one of Bangor's outstanding citizens. He has given

generously of his time and resources to civic, educational and philanthropic institutions such as the Eastern Maine Medical Center and the University of Maine.



#75



#77



#76

#78, right

The rigid rules that separated Russian Jews from Bangor's Protestant middle and upper classes slowly gave way to token inclusion in organizations and then to full-scale acceptance.

A few men and women in the city quietly led this effort to overcome historic prejudice and forge a new role for Jews in Bangor. Dr. Lawrence Cutler, the son of a Russian

Jewish immigrant, was born in Old Town. He studied at the University of Maine and Tufts Medical School. In the late 1930s he established a practice in Bangor and became the first Jewish doctor at Eastern Maine Medical Hospital.

Dr. Cutler was a distinguished figure in both medicine and public education. He served as Chief of the Medical

Service of the Eastern Maine Medical Center and was a member of the Bangor School Board for two decades. He was the first Jewish member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine, including ten years as its chairman. With persistence and grace, Cutler broke through traditional barriers in both his professional and public work.

Catherine Epstein Cutler was born in Bangor. Her immigrant father went from peddling into the wholesale dry-goods business. He sent his three daughters to college after which all three married doctors from Bangor and Old Town. Catherine returned to Bangor from Wellesley, married Lawrence and built a remarkable career of volunteer work in Jewish and non-Jewish causes, particularly in the field of family services and mental health counseling.