

*C. Frances Smith*

Dec. 2, 1962

It seems to me <sup>almost</sup> one has to be an immigrant to understand the problems of the immigrant when he arrives in a new country. However, you get some idea of this when you travel and find yourself a foreigner in a foreign land where you do not understand a word of the language as spoken there. When you think of your own parents, grand parents or great grand parents who came to this country, without much money, with little knowledge of the life here, with hardly any understanding of the pattern of city or town living, and with virtually no knowledge of the language, you must stop and admire the courage, the fortitude and the faith of those people. I think the faith was the strongest. You may think the spirit of freedom was stronger and perhaps in our religion ~~they~~ are almost the same. The Jewish religion is supposedly the freest religion in the civilized world. You say, Hear O Isreal the Lord our God, the Lord is one. When you think of that as being our religion, it is the freest, and perhaps if you can understand all the implications and involvements, you begin to understand why the Jewish immigrant felt very free when he landed on these shores. All else that happened was commentary. He was here. He was free from the Czar, from the pogroms, from the evils of 19th century Europe; his faith was as perfect as he knew how to make it perfect, and he had no fears whatever <sup>and his little ones</sup>. God was there to take care of him. You can see that his chance for survival was good. At least that is how I see it.

Now, why he came to Maine is another question. I have been told that the peddler needed no license here and a license immediately brought up the evils of the small town or even larger place from where he came. A license was not freedom. He came to Maine and in many cases, if not in most, he peddled. He did the same in the south, the west, and the north. In N. E., he did find a stern justice and a way of living, it seems to me that he could understand. *It was based closely on his own way of living. O.T.*  
In discussing the early settler of Bath, I talked with Miss Sophie Mikelsky.

*Hannon Hovee*

Thruout the notes taken from the Women's Society secretary books, there is the matter of money collected and spent. <sup>money was being saved systematically</sup> This was important to the group <sup>for a</sup> in the early days. It is still important. Their efforts to raise money <sup>House of</sup> <sup>Worship</sup> ~~are~~ fantastic. They used raffles continually. Some were confined to the group and some included the outside. The meetings were very small at times; 7 or 8 attended. They were even held weekly in the beginning. This was perhaps the only contacts socially that these people had. Most of them had families and worked alongside their husbands in whatever business ~~They~~ happened to be. Everyone seemed to be on friendly terms with the other, at least at the meetings.

The women did a great deal of handwork and offered it for sale and for raffling. This included yokes for blouses or dresses, mittens, sweaters, and scarves for bureaux. Community suppers were popular and every one is accounted for down to the minutest detail. Everyone seemed to enjoy attending. The Passover orders and candle orders weave in and out of the early years like a gentle <sup>persuasive</sup> ~~persuasive~~ refrain. It almost lulls one to sleep.

Beginning with the 30' a few of another generation appeared and you notice in the secretary's books, better and clearer notes taken, though often an explanation is omitted. You can see why this is so. <sup>It was a matter accepted</sup> The newer generation had the advantage of schooling.

The 40's are concerned with the war years and stamps needed for meat purchases. The after war-years are also important as the group adjusts to a newer kind of living.

The 50's are really ours and who needs to discuss them. We are of age literally. Today, our organization is 40 years old. We are mature. We have gone thru adolescence and early years bearing all the scars but at 40 years of service to ourselves and the community, no one need feel we have missed <sup>ered</sup> much. We have seen a world shatte~~d~~<sup>red</sup>, a people partially destroyed and a new nation born~~d~~ and risen from the ashes of an older civilization to take its place in the world with other nations following and using ours as an example. We have seen much and I hope we all live a long time, to see more.

The Mikelsky's as we know them, remained in Bath.

This is a pattern well known in Jewish history in USA and that is why I have written it all down as she gave it to me. The Mikelsky children were the first Jewish children to go to and graduate high school and probably some were among the first of that generation to go to and finish college. We also find this in every part of the country.

Before 1900, Miss Sophie remembers and this goes on long after 1900, that her father and the other few men here went to Portland for the high holidays and for memorial services. They - at least Mr. Mikelsky - taught the boys until 13 and then went to Portland for the Saturday service for Bar Mitzvah. What is happening today to Bar Mitzvah celebrations was unknown then. It was a very holy observance back in the early days of our people. A bar Mizvah meant a boy was old enough to be part of a religious service.

To continue from there I need your help:

Mr. Brown came here as a bachelor in ab. 1895 married a girl from Boston & as the pattern follows, brought her to Bath as a bride..

Mrs. Celia Brown as a young woman held Miss /Sophie by the hand as they both went down to the wharf to see the launching of the Ammen-Ram, a battleship which took place in December 1894, she thinks.

Mrs. Milkelsky died in 1911. Miss Sophie recalls her mother attended meetings with other Jewish women in what is now the YMCA building.

Nathan Petlock ~~family~~ came in June 1904 - Family 1907 ?

Sam Levin came as a bachelor, drove up to Bangor and found himself a bride, the vivacious Bella Wolf. In 1911

Mr. Solovich and a brother arrived in the late 90's and Mr. Abe Miller came in 1898

*auth. by 1902*  
~~B. G. G. G. G. G.~~  
~~Map came 1912~~

*Greenblatts - 1914*      *Zimmeman 4/1946*

*J. Smith 1930 - Sep.*      *A. G. G. G. G. - 1922*

*Jakz Smith - 1936 Sep*      *Ricie & mo 3 1944*

*Prawers 1936 - Dec*      *Kauss - 1954*

*Kramer 1938*      *Harold 1936 - but 1937*

*M. Porich - 1904-5*  
*N. Porich - 1917 from BH 1886*  
*Larry & Sylvia - 1946*  
*Bob Levine 1940*  
*Abe 1947*