

# Community Mourns the Death of Sol Rosenbloom

By H. NORMAN SHOOP

Pittsburgh Jewry suffers the loss of a third great community leader within a period of eleven months.

The community was shocked Monday when word was flashed into Pittsburgh that Sol Rosenbloom, who had justly earned the name of philanthropist, had died at 3 o'clock in the morning in the Hotel-Marguery, Park Avenue, New York.

He became ill while seated at a table at a banquet of the Jewish Theological Seminary at 10 o'clock Sunday night. He died five hours later, while members of his family were at the bedside.

Last December Isaac Seder died in Baltimore. Soon after Dr. K. I. Sanes passed away.

Mr. Rosenbloom, who had given away many hundreds of thousands of



Sol Rosenbloom

dollars for charity, Jewish education and Palestine development, had, during the last few years, attracted the attention of the Jewish people, not alone in this country, but in Europe and elsewhere. He had assumed in a short space of years, the role of a Jew of national, and, to a certain extent, international fame.

Mr. Rosenbloom was, at the time of his death, steadily moving to the very front in the great Palestinian movement.

He was one of the country's foremost exponents of Jewish education. To his untiring efforts and financial support is attributed, in a large part, the success of Jewish education in Pittsburgh, throughout the country and in far away Palestine.

Though a comparatively young man and a man of business and finance, Mr. Rosenbloom had a scholarly knowledge of Hebrew. He was a true lover of the ancient language and believed in it to the extent that he devoted most of his time and vast sums of his wealth toward promoting it.

Mr. Rosenbloom was an idealist. He was a man who dreamed and he dreamed in a practical way, so far as was humanly possible. To talk with him intimately for a while, to learn his ideals and his dreams, to know him well, was to believe in Sol Rosenbloom and to respect him.

He was a self-made man, rising from the position of a keeper of a little shop to a position of importance in the financial world.

Within the space of a comparatively few years Mr. Rosenbloom became a financial power. A great part of his fortune he distributed wisely and generously in helping the needy and in advancing those other causes that were dear to him.

Mr. Rosenbloom leaves his wife, Mrs. Celia Rosenbloom; two sons, Charles and Arthur; a daughter,

Estelle; two brothers, Meyer and Morris Rosenbloom, and three sisters, Mrs. Louis J. Stein, Mrs. Samuel Buckstein, of Atlantic City, and Mrs. Eva Sadoransky, of Poland.

Sol Rosenbloom was born in Suchovolie, Russia. He studied as a youth in the Yeshiva in Slonim and Zaludok in Russian Poland, where he was prepared for the Rabbinate. Both of his great-grandfathers were famous Russian rabbis, one in Suchovolie, and the other in Ticktin. As a student of the Talmud and of Jewish philosophy, he distinguished himself, and in the Yeshiva he was considered a Chariff and an Illu.

He came to America at the age of 19 and continued his Talmudic and philosophic studies.

Sol Rosenbloom was a "quaint and instructive personality in Jewish life". Notwithstanding the economic struggle of his earlier years and despite the wonderful commercial success of his later years, he nevertheless always found time to keep fresh and deepen

in his faith and unstinted devotion to his people."

An ideal of Mr. Rosenbloom is expressed in a prediction he made some time ago. It follows: "I predict that the time will come when universities and colleges will consider the knowledge of Hebrew, Jewish history and Jewish literature equivalent to the knowledge of German, Latin, French or any language; that the knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish history and literature, as taught at the Hebrew Institute will entitle students seeking admission to colleges or universities the same credits that the knowledge of German, French, Latin or any other language would entitle them."

Mr. Rosenbloom was chairman of the committee on arrangements for the testimonial dinner to Rabbi M. S. Sivitz this Sunday night in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall. His name is on the dinner invitations sent out during the week.

Sol Rosenbloom was affiliated in an active way with numerous organizations, international, national and local. Some of them are:

Honorary President, Mid-Western Jewish Educational Organization.

President, Hebrew Institute.

Member, American Committee of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

Vice-chairman, Business Men's Council, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies.

Trustee, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies.

Member, Board of Directors, American Committee of Jewish Exploration Society.

Director, Jewish Publication Society of America.

International Treasurer, Palestine Development Council.

Honorary President, Keren Hayesod, Palestine Foundation Fund, in Pittsburgh District.

Honorary Chairman, United Synagogue of America Building Fund campaign for \$400,000 for establishment of Jerusalem Synagogue Center.

Vice-chairman of United Jerusalem Synagogue Center.

Member, Board of Directors, Hebrew Free Loan Association.

Member, Board of Directors, Montefiore Hospital.

Vice-chairman, Montefiore Hospital Campaign.

Director, Zionist Organization of Pittsburgh.

Former member, Board of Directors, Zionist Organization of America.

Director, United Synagogue of America.

Member, Rodef Shalom Temple.

Member, Tree of Life Synagogue.

Director, Y. M. H. A.

his love for his studies and his devotion to Hebrew culture. He was considered an authority on the writings and philosophies of Jehuda Halevy, Maimonides, Iben Ben Ezra and others of that great school.

He had contributed to the Menorah Journal and was the author of a number of brochures and letters on Jewish theology, literature and philosophy, in all of which he had shown striking and original thought.

Newspapermen, who have interviewed him, have told of his quaint warm simplicity; his unobtrusive, modest speech; his profound conceptions of Judaism and his keen, broad, concise conclusions.

We quote from a recent interview: "His utterances are genuine; utterances that bespeak fullest comprehension, a thorough, wide-awake understanding and knowledge of the subject. Above all originality characterizes his thoughts so convincingly expressed. Behind a calm, cool and reserved countenance and demeanor there is a deadly earnestness and intensity, proving beyond the slightest possibility of contradiction, the presence of a burning, glowing, whole-hearted, all-consuming love and pride

While at the dinner of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, he gave \$10,000 to the Seminary.

One of his last large charity contributions was made at the dinner November 3rd in the Hotel Schenley, when Jewish business and professional men opened their campaign in behalf of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. Mr. Rosenbloom made known an annual subscription to Federation of \$10,000. He was serving as vice-chairman of the Business Men's Council of the Federation.

Mr. Rosenbloom was elected president of the Hebrew Institute for a successive number of years. He was always in close touch with the Institute through its principal, Prof. I. A. Abrams.

An interview by Samuel S. Grossman, appearing in the Jewish Criterion several years ago, best describes Sol Rosenbloom. We reprint it in full.

It is entitled, "Pragmatism, Idealism and Leadership—A Glimpse Into a Personality." It follows:

"Our portrait gallery of interesting Jews is monotonous. The 'social worker', the rabbi, the campaign contributor, and the campaign extortioner are, by this time, standardized types. One who, like myself, goes adventuring

through Jewish life as it is lived in America, rarely finds a novelty—especially a new face that signifies much of anything.

"So, let me hold up for your glance, and possibly also your deep interest, an unusual fellow-Jew in America. He does not make speeches; he does not shout at conventions; he is not a battion; he is a business man, but not a materialist.

"Let me introduce, instead, a man who is a pragmatic idealist. I would have said an efficient idealist, but this man is not so much interested in the tricks of the trade as he is in the accomplishment of an ideal. In other words, not a social worker, but a Jewish soul with a business man's desire for making the soul, like his money, work at a profit to his people.

"Sol Rosenbloom was born in Suchovolie, Russia. He got a good education, the old-fashioned kind in a Yeshiva, mind you. On top of that he studied Jewish philosophy, especially Rabbam. Then to America at the age of 19 and in business. Today, at an age several years under the half century mark, he is exceedingly prosperous, deeply Jewish and a quaint and constructive personality in Jewish life.

"His 'quaintness' consists in that, unlike most successful Jewish business men, he has a passionate desire to accomplish a spiritual idea in Jewish life. Mind you, not a charitable or philanthropic one, but a cultural and religious national purpose."

Sol Rosenbloom has been thinking out his own philosophy for many years. When he talks he is not mouthing platitudes, but expressing profound convictions and spiritual longings.

He has just received a cable of appreciation from Prof. Weizmann and other members of the Central Committee for the Hebrew University as a remembrance of his inspiration in adding a new idea to the plan of the Hebrew University. Wherefore this practical business man seemed lawful prey for an interview.

"I have tried to anticipate in my mind," said Mr. Rosenbloom, "that the intellectual and cultural hunger of our people—a trait common to them in all ages and all lands—will be intensified when Palestine becomes a Jewish homeland. While I have realized the many pressing demands for immediate relief of the physical condition of Jewry in many lands, I could not deny to myself that if we do not anticipate the other phase, ours will be a more serious starvation and stagnation in Palestine.

"I have loved my people because I have loved and revered my religion and because by whatever measures of thought I probed traditional Judaism, I have always found it our only firm foothold in life. The Jewish people then are means for carrying on the Jewish soul; and the Jewish homeland is a special means of making the national life of the people more secure and more useful. And so, reasoning in this manner, the Hebrew University in Palestine seemed to be the pivot on which everything hinged and about which the balance of religion, nation, and land, adjusted itself.

"But what significance would this University have if it should become merely a multiplication of European sciences? We are a people primarily consecrated to a spiritual life. Our feverish intellectualism is frequently a dry substitute for truer inner forces.

"That is why I suggested the establishment of a Chair in the Hebrew University which will make its purpose that of Maimonides and other great Jewish minds, the development of Jewish religious science from a traditional Jewish viewpoint.

"Not merely knowledge and reason is our need in Palestine, but the combination of faith and reason. Science



alone may be the mother of the gross-materialism. But the perfect interpretation of faith by reason will always tend to release and develop new spiritual forces.

"The holy of holies of such traditional Jewish learning should be in the new Hebrew University. Such a Chair would serve many purposes. First of all, that of 'know thyself'. While I do not think that at present we are ready to have all departments of the University devoted exclusively to such a program of learning, the establishment of these courses will permeate the atmosphere of the University. It will make all the students and the men and women whose lives they influence directly, turn into themselves, into the resources of the precious soul of the Jewish people.

"To the world of non-Jews such courses of Jewish science (whose bias is traditional, faithful Judaism) will answer the cry of materialism constantly raised against us. For there the world may touch our spirit as we know it and gain new respect for the ancient culture of our rejuvenated people.

"With all this, I would not have it understood that such a department should merely dabble in the abstract, the mystical or the meta-physical. It is for daily life that our religion has given us and I can see in this division of the Hebrew University an opportunity for blazing the path for righteous social action and counsel in the grave as well as the petty affairs of individuals and nations.

"This division should be responsible for training Jewish leaders. I do not mean only men who fall into the category of preachers or so-called professional social workers—I mean more broadly a class of men and women trained to lead in communal affairs as laymen. We need such leaders more in the community at large than we have ever reckoned. Both directly by study at the Hebrew University itself, and by being susceptible to its influence over the wide-world, Jewish men and women will benefit by its spiritual radiations and will prove more worthy as leaders and followers in Jewish affairs.

"I feel very strongly that we who have been the trustees of the spiritual life of the world for many hundreds of years, must now seize the opportunity and establish a spiritual foundation for our own life and as far as possible again for the life of the people around us. That is why I urge the establishment of a Chair for the study and teaching of traditional Judaism as Jewish science in the Hebrew University."

Mr. Rosenbloom has backed his hopes with his money. He has contributed \$35,000 to the Hebrew University. What is more important, he has contributed many new ideals which the Central Committee has gratefully acknowledged. With all these he has not shirked his duty in relief and charitable work. In Pittsburgh, they count Mr. Rosenbloom as the "heavy artillery" in every drive for any Jewish purpose whatsoever.

Probably the most interesting feature of this new type of practical thinking laymen is his complete consistency and his symmetry of thought in regard to the relation of the Goluth to Palestine.

In his home town, Pittsburgh, he is the President of the Hebrew Institute, one of the largest and most modern institutions for Jewish education in the country. He has not only made it a large success, but he has arranged that the 400 men who support the institution shall participate in its spiritual benefits by offering their support in the form of scholarships. There is a sense of personal participation about this arrangement which makes the giver of the funds as much a part of the classes as the child who receives the instructions.

When I met Mr. Rosenbloom in New York, he had left his business in Pittsburgh in order to attend the meeting

of the Provisional Committee for Jewish Education in America, now being organized.

"America will be and remain the greatest Jewish center in the world so far as men and resources are to be taken into consideration. We must build up here a system of Jewish education that will be ready to absorb inspiration that the Hebrew University in Palestine and every institution there will enkindle. We must have a whole structure here. That is why I am interested here in the National Organization for Jewish education. We hope to propagandize for Jewish education here; to work out methods and textbooks for schools. We also hope to assist in organizing houses of learning throughout the land."

I complimented Mr. Rosenbloom on his great success as business man and expressed my wonder that he had not lost his soul in the process of amassing a small fortune. He smiled in his gentle, quaint manner.

"I tried to keep in mind that my success in business, if I ever achieve it, would merely be an instrument for the cause in which I am so deeply interested. If I succeed in helping the cause of Jewish education in the light in which I understand it both in Palestine and in the Goluth, then I shall feel that I have lived a practical useful life."

A fine adventure was this one with Mr. Rosenbloom. Alas, you meet such types all too infrequently.

**BETH JACOB CONGREGATION HONORS PRESIDENT**

The Board of Directors of the Beth Jacob Congregation held a surprise party on Wednesday, November 11th, in honor of the president and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. I. Parker. Refreshments were served and a delightful program



Mr. I. Parker, President, Beth Jacob Synagogue

was carried out. The following spoke: Rev. L. Baker, Rev. J. Ryave, A. S. Clovsky, S. Whitman, M. Joseph, L. Bardin, J. Picovsky, L. Abramovitz, Harry Slifkin and S. Seminofsky. As a token of appreciation of their services, a beautiful bouquet of flowers was presented to them. Mr. Max Epstein making the presentation speech. Mr. and Mrs. Parker responded with well-chosen remarks. Rev. L. Levitt rendered several musical selections and Mr. H. Beeson served as toastmaster.

**CONCERT AT JEWISH HOME FOR THE AGED VERY SUCCESSFUL**

The old folks of the Jewish Home for the Aged were treated to a very beautiful concert on Sunday, November 15th, through the generous efforts of a number of well-known artists of the city.

The concert was in charge of Mrs. Anna Kirkel, the following participated: Mrs. Goodman A. Rose, vocal

solo, accompanied by Miss Miriam Kirkel; Miss Ethel Lieberman, vocal solo; Miss M. Sparks, vocal solo; Miss Edna Bennett, vocal solo; Miss Julia Katz, piano solo, and Mr. Leopold Kirkel, violin solo.

The officers, Board of Directors and particularly the old people of the "Home" are very grateful to the above mentioned artists and take this means of assuring them of their appreciation of their kindness.

**Jewish Mothers' Club of Beechview**

The regular meeting was held Tuesday evening, November 17th, at the home of Mrs. J. M. Shapiro, Mrs. A. Zober, presiding.

Mrs. Shapiro and Mrs. Jos. Bodek, gave very encouraging reports on the campaign for new members. Five new names were added to the roll.

Mrs. S. A. Shuben, chairman for the needlework drive, reported having sent to headquarters much linens and cash received from the community. Mrs. A. Zober reported having sent fifteen quarts of jelly and five cans of fruit to the Jewish Home for Babies.

The community card party for ladies and gentlemen will be held Tuesday evening, November 24th, at the home of Mrs. P. Tabatchnech, 1600 Memorial Drive, Dormont. Tickets can be obtained from any of the members or at the door. Assessment, 50c per person. There will be a prize for each table.

The plans for the annual ball are progressing nicely. Tickets will be on sale next week. The music committee reports that they have engaged Maggio's Orchestra.

Attention is called to the Religious School which is held every Sunday morning at Boylan Hall, at 9:45 A. M. The pupils are rehearsing for the Chanukah entertainment.

**Fidelis Club**

The regular meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Fraiberg, of Munhall, Pa., on Sunday evening, November 15th. The Social Committee is completing arrangements for a Thanksgiving reception, to be held on Wednesday evening, November 25th, at the home of Mr. Lawrence Schultz, 1503 Boulevard of Allies.

Mr. Nathan Debroff, athletic director, announced that bowling reservations have been made at the Forward Alley for every Friday evening, and urged the members to be present with their friends. The Fidelis Bowling team is now prepared to book local teams for match games. Any teams interested will kindly communicate with Mr. Debroff, Schenley 3109-W.

The next meeting will take place at the home of Mr. Hyman Nathan, 2310 Murray Avenue, on Sunday evening, November 29th. The important feature of this meeting will be the discussion of the new constitution. The name of Mr. Harry Leventon has been added to the membership of the organization.

"Israel Among the Nations Today," will be the subject on which Mr. Herman Bernstein will speak Sunday evening, November 22nd, at the Beth Shalom Community House. Mr. Bernstein at the present time is contributing editor of the "Jewish Tribune," of New York. The public is invited to attend.

**COMMUNITY-WIDE INTEREST IN "EAST AND WEST"**

The greatest dramatic event in the history of the Jewish community is a little more than three weeks away. A distinguished cast will present "East and West", a three-act symbolic play with music, Tuesday evening, December 15th, in the Syria Mosque.

The play, by Dr. Luba Robin Goldsmith, and the music by Nathaniel Robin, young Pittsburgh composer, has awakened the interest of the entire community. There is in evidence a genuine community-wide enthusiasm and a capacity throng is assured.

Never before has a Jewish organization here ever attempted a production on so huge a scale. Folk and ballet dancing and a symphony orchestra are only two of the features.

The folk dancing is under the direction of Theodore Viehman, of the Theater of Carnegie Tech. Mme. Kartova, of Carnegie Tech, is in charge of the ballet. Hardie Albright has charge of the designing of the costumes.

Particular interest has been taken in the announcement that Mrs. A. H. Vixman will play the part of Inspiration in the drama. The presence in the cast of the popular community leader is sufficient, in itself, to win general attention. Rabbi B. A. Lichter also has been persuaded to take a part. He will have the role of "Peace".

Mrs. Leo L. Half is chairman of the production and her committee, including Mr. Viehman, spent many days in selecting the cast out of a large number of contestants. Rehearsals are being held regularly.

Added lustre is given the production by reason of the appearance in the cast also of Blanche Levy, Pittsburgh girl, who was a member of the cast in the famed Broadway show "Aphrodite".

"East and West" is based on the spiritual union of the civilization of the East and West. The spirit of Old Israel is symbolized by the Mother of

Israel, the part Miss Levy is to play. The spirit of Young Israel is symbolized by a beautiful maiden, Bas Ami (the daughter of the people). Miss Bertha Glassner has that role.

Rabbi Lichter, as "Peace", brings a great message. Peace is represented as an ancient prophet. The music expresses the moods and characters of the play. The music for the character "Mother of Israel" is particularly pleasing. There are choruses and dances, as well as a solo by Bas Ami and a violin solo by Judah, played by Saul H. Swartz.

The period of the play is within the last 40 years. The first act takes place on May Day in the Western World, the second act on the road from East to West, and the third act in Palestine on the Succoth—the Harvest festival.

The patroness list is growing daily and the outstanding men and women of the community are steadily adding their names to the list.

Mrs. Baer Horvitz is chairman of patronesses. Mrs. A. H. Vixman is general chairman, Mrs. Leo Half is chairman of production, Mrs. S. S. Cohen is chairman of tickets, Mrs. Sol Rosenbloom is chairman of boxes, Mrs. S. I. Lebeau is chairman of the souvenir program committee, and Mrs. Charles B. Buerger is chairman of publicity.

The Rev. Julius Bloom is in charge of the Pilgrims' Chorus, a feature of "East and West". A rehearsal will be held at 8:00 P. M. Saturday night in the B'nai Israel Synagogue. All men and women interested in choral work are invited to be present.

You are invited to the Union Thanksgiving Service, Tree of Life Synagogue, Wednesday evening, November 25th, 8:15 P. M.