



THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K1242

Wollman Family Collection
[Jewish Community Archives]
1986
1 folder

Book: "Jonas and Betty (Kohn) Wollman and Their Descendants," by. Joan F. Curran.

HISTORY:

The traceable history of the Wollman family commences with Jonas Wollman (March 3, 1824-October 9, 1905), a Jewish merchant hailing from Kempen, Germany, who arrived in New York on July 1, 1851. Moving to St. Louis, he married Betty Kohn (1836/1838-1927), the daughter of Jewish immigrants from Bohemia. They settled in Leavenworth in 1855 when Kansas was convulsed by clashes between abolitionists and slavery advocates. (The Wollmans narrowly missed being assaulted by mobs.) Becoming a naturalized citizen in 1858, Jonas built the city's first three-story brick building on Delaware Street which housed his clothing store. In the ensuing decades, he became a prominent citizen in Leavenworth (Abraham Lincoln had dinner at his home in 1859). He served in the Kansas State Militia during the Civil War, and launched the city's first Reform congregation where he served as its vice president. Retiring in 1888, Jonas moved to Kansas City and purchased a house at 720 West 11th Street. Following his death in 1905, Betty moved to New York and resided in a twenty-two room apartment at 1 West 70th St (where several of her children lived after retirement) until her death on December 25, 1927.

Jonas and Betty had eight children who had distinguished lives: Rosa (July 17, 1856- November 30, 1912) married Albert Hess, the president of the Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company; Henry (August 9, 1858- March 13, 1936), the first president of the Kansas Lodge of the Free Sons of Israel, was a lawyer who served as the U.S. Commissioner for Missouri and on the Jackson County Circuit Court; Morton (January 1, 1863- July 11, 1924) worked as a management assistant for his brother William's firm; Etta (June 15, 1865-December 2, 1933) married Siegfried Bienenstok, who ran a family fur business; William (September 28, 1867- March 27, 1937) was a stock broker involved in philanthropy; Kate

(December 5, 1869- October 15, 1955) helped launch H & R Block and donated funds for the Wollman Memorial Rink in 1950, then the largest outdoor skating rink in the world; Benjamin (January 20, 1872- May 1, 1934) worked for his brother Henry's law firm and participated in the organization of Standard Oil's Kansas branch; and Lillian (April 6/18 1875-May 6, 1895) died of unknown causes at the age of 20.

PROVENANCE:

This gift was received from Joseph Oshiver as accession KA1595 on October 27, 2005.

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DESCRIPTION:

This collection consists of a book chronicling the history of the Wollman family.

INVENTORY:

BOX 001

Folder 1. Curran. Joan F. *Jonas and Betty (Kohn) Wollman and Their Descendants*. Merriam, Kansas: Published by Henry Wollman Bloch, 1986.