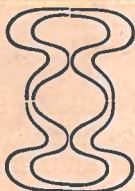


Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Soc'y

a consolidation of the

HEBREW
SHELTERING
HOUSE
ASS'N AND



HEBREW
IMMIGRANT
AID
SOCIETY

229-231 EAST BROADWAY,
NEW YORK.

OBJECTS.

To facilitate the landing of Jewish Immigrants at Ellis Island; to provide for them temporary shelter, food, clothing and such other aid as may be deemed necessary, to guide them to their destination; to prevent them from becoming public charges and help them to obtain employment; to discourage their settling in congested cities; to maintain Bureaus of Information and publish literature on the industrial, agricultural and commercial status of the country; to disseminate knowledge of the United States Immigration Laws in the centres of emigration in Europe with a view of preventing undesirable persons from emigrating to the United States; to foster American ideals among the new-comers and to instil patriotism and love for their adopted country through the medium of lectures and literary publications.

“For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.”—
Exodus, XXIII:9.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Be it known That whereas Meyer Bloomfield, Max Wyzanski, Joseph Melnick, Jacob E. Nathanson, David Glassburg, David Rogers, Zax Freedman, Nathan Lumiansky, James H. Stone, Samuel Kabatznick and Abraham H. Goldberg have associated themselves with the intention of forming a corporation under the name of

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society,

for the purpose of charitable assistance to Hebrew Immigrants by voluntary contributions,

and have complied with the provisions of the Statutes of this Commonwealth in such case made and provided, as appears from the certificate of the President, Treasurer and Executive Committee of said corporation, duly approved by the Commissioner of Corporations, and recorded in this office:

Now, Therefore, I, WILLIAM M. OLIN, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that said Meyer Bloomfield, Max Wyzanski, Joseph Melnick, Jacob E. Nathanson, David Glassburg, David Rogers, Zax Freedman, Nathan Lumiansky, James H. Stone, Samuel Kabatznick and Abraham H. Goldberg, their associates

and successors, are legally organized and established as, and are hereby made, an existing corporation under the name of

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society,

with the powers, rights and privileges, and subject to the limitations, duties and restrictions, which by law appertain thereto.

Witness my official signature hereunto subscribed,

and the Great Seal of the Commonwealth of

(L. S.)

Massachusetts hereunto affixed, this eighteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and four.

(Signed) Wm. M. Olin
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Office of the Secretary

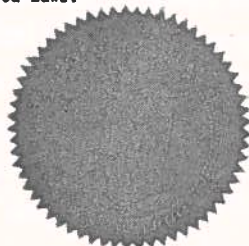
Boston, January 29, 1954.

I Hereby Certify, that the foregoing is a true copy of the record of the Certificate of Incorporation of

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society,

organized under the provisions of chapter one hundred and twenty-five of the Revised Laws.

Witness the Great Seal of the Commonwealth.



Edward J. Cronin

EDWARD J. CRONIN
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Leo W. Harlow
Deputy Secretary.

History of HIAS Massachusetts

1904 - 1954

By HELEN ALPERT
Executive Director, HIAS — Boston



*Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye
were strangers in the land of Egypt.*

DEUTERONOMY 10

IMMIGRATION IS AN IMPORTANT THEME in the social history of the United States. From the old world America attracted the adventurer, the downtrodden, the persecuted, and the seeker of freedom — religious, political, and economic. From cabin to steerage they crowded the transatlantic liner and entered the American melting pot to come out an invaluable asset of a growing nation.

The countries from which people came, the reasons for which they came, the homes they built here, and the communities and institutions which they established, as well as the opportunities created by the foreign born and their children, the ideals they dreamed and sought to fulfill, the comparative judgment and first hand knowledge of old world conditions of all kinds which shaped the perspective and outlook of the immigrants with keen appreciation and excellent evaluation of the American outlook — all these constitute the living and spiritual heritage that is America.

A group of young, devoted Jewish men banded together in Boston late in the nineteenth century to give their voluntary friendly assistance to new arrivals. Fifty years ago, in 1904, this group obtained a corporate charter in Massachusetts under the name of The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. It has continued to function to this day, although many other organizations devoted to similar labors have come and gone in the intervening years. The Kishineff massacres in 1903 shocked the moral sensibilities of the world and prompted, in some measure, the application for the present charter of the Boston Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Since its beginnings HIAS has been faithful to its trust of friendly assistance to the new arrivals and their families.

“The loosening of the bound . . . and sheltering the stranger” were the clarion

mottees with Biblical tones for the early letterheads of the organization. The early stationery also carried the names of Harris Poorvu, Hyman Pill, Abraham Alpert, Meyer Bloomfield, Max Wyzanski, and Samuel L. Bailen. These were the policies and the men who set the traditions of HIAS. Every one of the early members remained loyally with the organization throughout his lifetime, and recruited his friends; a record of loyal belief in the organization that is another inspiring element in the story. The officers and staff of HIAS have served immigrants, aliens, and prospective citizens for the sake of the families involved and also for the sake of the United States. From the beginning, HIAS has been concerned that the newcomer and stranger should cease to feel himself a stranger and be able to feel at home in our America.

Harris Poorvu, its president for twenty years, and now its treasurer, has been unflinching in his support and devotion. During many periods in its early history, the HIAS office was maintained only because Mr. Poorvu remitted the rent. Unseen to the general public, Mr. Poorvu has been equally staunch in his loyalty and services to HIAS.

Others on the staff served for long periods without compensation. They also undertook visits all over New England to locate facilities and friends for the new Jewish arrivals. Often HIAS was compelled to undertake special tasks, beyond the strict line of duty, venturing into the field of education with classes in English and American civics and history. The directors and the staff of HIAS were required to provide shelter and social service at short notice, or to arrange and conduct religious services, and to assist in employment and schooling.

When transatlantic boats arrived on the eve of Sabbath or a major holiday, religious services and special kosher menus often had to be provided quickly by HIAS on the pier. In many years, HIAS-Boston, at short notice and with little help, conducted the Passover Seder for the newcomers, right on the docks. Many Jewish families began their life on American soil with dockside religious services under the supervision of HIAS, where they offered their prayers for safe arrival with warm gratitude to their new land included in the familiar liturgy of Rosh Hashonah or Yom Kippur or Sukkoth.

The records of arrivals of Jewish immigrants at the several ports of New England were carefully gathered by HIAS, and copies were made of earlier arrivals from records no longer available to public reference. This was an act of great foresight. Thus HIAS assembled valuable evidence which cannot be duplicated and now prove very important for naturalization and other legal identification purposes. These records of HIAS are constantly utilized and consulted by government bureaus and other social agencies and accepted as valid documentary proof. These records are for the ports of Boston, Providence, Portland, etc.

Public officials, in many government departments, have come to know the work

of HIAS at first hand and have always expressed their admiration and gratitude. These records of ship arrivals is a dramatic example of how HIAS has served and assisted the work of governmental agencies.

During the war years, 1914 to 1916, HIAS-Boston was affiliated with the Federated Jewish Charities (now the Associated Jewish Philanthropies). In order to be able to serve more effectively at the close of war hostilities, due to changes wrought by war conditions, HIAS-Boston in 1916 merged with The Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society of New York. That merger protected the autonomy of the Boston HIAS. It also ensured that HIAS-Boston would function as part of the national and international organization upon all immigration and naturalization and related matters. The close relationship with HIAS-New York and the other offices of HIAS in this land and over the world has proved valuable and harmonious in the service and function of this organization. Moreover, as part of the world-wide organization, HIAS was preparing for the important work which would come at the end of World War I.

For one thing, there was the intricate and delicate matter of bringing far-distant relatives into communication with each other, after the war had broken all the channels of communication. To locate families, to furnish legal documents to replace those which had been destroyed, to effect reconciliation of lost blood kinspeople, to bring balm amid all the tragedies and broken homes because of war, HIAS was the first organization to develop the adequate skill and techniques following both World Wars. Post-war conditions meant heavy and arduous work for HIAS.

The fervor of Americanism during World War I prompted HIAS-Boston to embark on an aggressive educational program to encourage aliens to become naturalized. Spearheaded by Abraham Alpert, who served as educational director, HIAS had many classes in American citizenship. Into every corner of the state, by pen and by speech, Mr. Alpert went to sit down with the foreign born, to urge the study of English and history, and to persuade them to study hard and make all necessary preparations to qualify as citizens. Concerts and stereopticon slides were used to win recruits and to illustrate the lectures. "Let there be no delays; become American citizens; study at night; prepare yourself; give evidence of your loyalty" HIAS-Boston kept urging. Until his death in 1939, Mr. Alpert served HIAS faithfully and was the coach, tutor, friend, and inspiration by which many people graduated from resident alien to full-fledged citizen.

Disastrous fires in Chelsea in 1908, and in Salem in 1915, made many immigrant people homeless. HIAS again went beyond its customary duties. Through HIAS, accommodation for temporary shelter and relief were set up. At 46 Lafayette Street, Salem, HIAS maintained a temporary home for 120 Jewish persons after the fire, and this work won the citation of state authorities.

The Armistice of 1917 began a new era in HIAS work and effort. There was an increase of immigration to the United States. Processing had to be done at the crowded piers amidst all kinds of confusion and difficulties. Through long hours, far into the night, the arrivals underwent examinations of their papers, their physical health, and personal belongings.

The HIAS Bank, the food parcels, were developed as part of the ambitious project to reunite families, and to keep families in friendly communication. HIAS developed more and more a world-wide view. Every major political decision by the nations increased the heavy duties of HIAS. With the rise of Hitler, HIAS became concerned with the work of emigrants from Europe to South America, and other havens willing to accept Jewish immigrants. As Hitler waxed in power and grew strong in Europe, HIAS was besieged with paper work involved in seeking visas for people who lived in the path of Hitler's relentless march to power.

HIAS always took the humanistic and humanitarian approach to all its work and to all the problems and tragedies which HIAS came to share through its petitioners.

The Alien Registration Act and other legislation became effective shortly after June, 1940, when Miss Helen Alpert became the executive director. Unprecedented demands were made upon HIAS by all those attempting to conform with the new and bewildering laws.

Since 1935, HIAS-Boston has had a vigorous and active ladies' auxiliary, now headed by Mrs. David Kramer.

Samuel Kalesky, Esq., was president of HIAS-Boston during the difficult days of World War II. His leadership was noteworthy. A veteran in communal effort, and seasoned by high office in fraternal and civic organizations, Mr. Kalesky devoted every ounce of his ability and energies to the work of HIAS, then busy with the displaced persons.

With the termination of hostilities in 1945, immigration again became an active function of HIAS. In cooperation with the International Refugee Organization, HIAS arranged for sponsors and executed necessary documents for the admittance of victims of Hitler's deliberately cruel subjugation of intellectuals and non-Aryans. This again made HIAS-Boston active in receiving new arrivals through our port. An unexpected volume of displaced persons were suddenly welcomed through the port of Boston to the American way of life. The unprecedented numbers of displaced persons taxed the facilities at hand so that everybody had to work long hours, box lunches had to be furnished, and sabbath services arranged.

More recently the immigration laws have been codified in the McCarran-Walter Act, which further curtails immigration from parts of the world where Jews are located. Until there is a modification in the law, Jewish immigration to the United

States will be quiescent, and HIAS once again will devote itself to the Americanization of the remaining aliens in our midst, and helping Jews in other parts of the world to emigrate to lands to which they are welcome and to help them become established there.

In 1948 HIAS-Boston became a member agency of the Combined Jewish Appeal, upon agreement by HIAS-New York and the CJA.

Samuel Abrams, Esq., has been serving HIAS as president in the best tradition of his predecessors. His wealth of judgment and happy faculty of effectuating policy has been of great help to HIAS, and aided community relations of HIAS among social agencies and with governmental departments.

HIAS has shared in every major movement in the community life. Its pages are filled with tears, with the tears of gratitude for all that HIAS has done in allaying tragedy.



Seder Service held in early stages of HIAS-Boston

Front Row, Standing Left to Right: Louis Domas, U. S. Immigration Inspector; Matron; Isaac Heller, President HIAS; J. Stone, Secretary HIAS; and Abraham Alpert, Director HIAS.